



EERIE

#42

OCT. 1972

SPOOKTACULAR SPECIAL ISSUE!

# EERIE

A WARREN MAGAZINE

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WHAT  
TERROR  
LURKS  
DEEP  
INSIDE THE  
DREADED  
OGRE'S  
CASTLE

SEE PAGE 42





# THE TRUE STORY OF EERIE... HOW TO GAIN FORTY POUNDS OF UGLY FAT IN SIX YEARS!

**S** long years have passed since the first issue of EERIE was published and still the letters come in beseeching us for the true story of EERIE, Creepy's better half and cousin-in-crime. Gnash your fangs out no longer, fellow fiends, herewith and without further ado, a history of ghouldom's favorite graveyard godsend, EERIE...

The year was 1965 and Uncle Creepy was undisputed King of the horror comics Mountain. He already had five issues tucked under his belt when the news that a companion horror comic was in the works, hit.

Asked a Creepy reader in Creepy #6, "Why don't you put Creepy out every month? I've almost bitten all my claws off waiting for Creepy!"

It was then that Creepy first announced the bitter news, "Just what I've been telling my Publisher! But do you know what he's done behind my back? He's made a deal with my crawly cousin, EERIE, to put out a magazine of YELL-YARNS during the months Creepy doesn't appear! Using my editor and artists yet! Isn't there any honor among FIENDS?"

The idea behind the publication of EERIE as Creepy himself begrudgingly explained it was that "OL' CHUBBY EERIE can whet your appetite during the off months until it's time for me to come through with the genuine ghoulish goods!"

Because Creepy had let the cat out of the bag, interest in the yet unpublished EERIE grew. Asked yet another Creepy reader in Creepy #7, "By the way, Uncle Creepy, please put in a picture of your cousin EERIE to prepare us for him." Answered

Creepy in his typically sanile manner, "NOTHING could prepare you for my crawly cousin. You'll have to take your chances when his magazine comes out! But since first sight might be too mind-shattering, I'll give you a brief glimpse of my wretched relative! The brief glimpse that Creepy allowed was a cut-off view of EERIE from his nose down.



Frazetta's mind-bending cover of EERIE #2. Our very first glimpse of EERIE.

Obviously, no love was lost between the two of them even though they both hailed from the dismal environs of Transylvania where ex-EC cartoonist Jack Davis first discovered them!

It was Davis who did the first renderings of EERIE and Creepy. EERIE is rumored to be his favorite! No wonder. With EERIE's second issue, the classic collector's edition, Creepy wormed his way in on the inside front and back covers, complaining about EERIE and singing his own praises.

"Don't let false fool you," Creepy said. "These fairy tales couldn't curdle milk let alone blood! When better spines are tingled, it's Uncle Creepy's ghoulish gathering of terror tales that will do it! Creepy also had the nerve to use the inside back cover of EERIE #2 as an ad for

his own foul fan club! EERIE scholars note that poor beleaguered Cousin EERIE did not even get a Fan Club of his own until EERIE #39.

Thus, two years after Creepy, EERIE started. "Welcome," said Uncle EERIE. "Don't be afraid. Come on in. What can you lose except (heh! heh!) your mind? As all you frenzied followers of Uncle Creepy's terror tabloid have been forewarned (most of you are all ready fore-armed), I'm Cousin EERIE. Fiendish fans will find my little chamber of chills even more blood curdling (Unc's not as young as he used to be)!"

Although little is known about EERIE's beginnings, even less is known of Creepy's. What we do know comes from EERIE as he explained it on the letters page of EERIE #15.

"The story is a long but interesting one," wrote EERIE. "A rich Transylvanian uncle of mine—Creepy's brother Gory—died (again!) last year. He had made a huge fortune selling human skulls to the Captain Company, and Uncle Creepy and I had to go to Transylvania to settle the estate. While we were on our tour of Transylvania, exchanging Transylvanian pieces of eight into dollars, we picked up some exciting story ideas. (Mine are better than Uncle Creepy's, of course!)"

While Creepy had an original story of sorts ("Monster Rally!" in Creepy #4), neither he or EERIE have had a series like Vampirella. EERIE did however appear together in one story, "Surprise Package," in Creepy #27, illustrated by Ernie Colon and written by Bill Parente. Both EERIE and Creepy deny the story however

and each claim the other was responsible for the slur.

Since EERIE #2, the verbal venom between EERIE and Creepy has been flying hot and heavy and no let-up is in sight, except for their mutual dislike for Creepy's niece, Vampirella.

When EERIE and Creepy first heard that Vampirella was on her way with a new horror magazine, they



Cousin EERIE's first appearance was a half-face tease to readers.

joined forces long enough to disavow her. One such rare appearance of EERIE and Creepy together be-moaning Vampirella appeared on p. 58 of EERIE #22. Said EERIE to Creepy, "Oh no. Not her! She's your niece and she spends her little fray-stay with you! Count me out!"

Over the years, Creepy has had any number of names for EERIE including hog head, flab face, jelly-belly, pimple-Dimples and Pumpkin Head. In retaliation, EERIE has ignored Creepy, appearing only once on the letters pages of Creepy in response to a particularly insulting remark.

The incident took place in Creepy #44 when a reader advised Creepy that "Cousin EERIE's smile nauseates me." Replied Creepy, "It nauseates me too. I think EERIE's whole face should be declared a disaster area."

"I heard that!" said

EERIE. "And both you creeps can go to hell!"

EERIE also once appeared in a Creepy back issue ad (Creepy #22) to advise readers, "Ech... Don't do it!"

Although it's extremely doubtful whether the two of them would ever appear together in a movie, EERIE's publisher James Warren mentions that "Charles Laughton—or get ready for this—Marty Allen (of the old Allen & Rossi comedy team) would make a fantastic EERIE while John Carradine would be perfect as Creepy."

What does the hard-pressed EERIE reader have to look forward to, you ask? What goodies lay in store for all those readers who've ignored Creepy's insults over the years and think EERIE's the best?

While you're waiting for fantastic poster reproductions of the great EERIE covers of years past, you might well want to outfit your hairy little hands with an EERIE ring.

Or an EERIE life-size mask molded from the grave.

EERIE also has his own Fan Club which features among other terror treasures, a scarily 8-1/2"x10" portrait by Richard Corben.

What else you ask? EERIE readers can continue to look forward to further appearances of, Dax, the warrior plus more of the greatest terror stories ever conceived by the most famous name in the field! Pity poor Creepy! With two years head start of EERIE, he still has yet to leave the starting gate at the cemetery.





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# EERIE

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**I AM DEAD, EGYPT, DEAD** Sinister is the mummy's tomb. Wrapped with that gauze is terror from beyond. From EERIE #35.



COME ON, *CULTURE VULTURES*, COUSIN EERIE'S GONNA BROADEN YOUR BRAIN WITH A TRIP TO THE MUSEUM! SOUNDS DULL? DON'T BE TOO SURE... BECAUSE IN THIS PARTICULAR MUSEUM...

# THE MUMMY STALKS!



NEXT DAY...

T-THIS IS HOW I FOUND HIM, INSPECTOR... SPRAWLED IN FRONT OF THE SARCOPHAGUS OF HARAT-ANKNEB!

ALL MY YEARS AT SCOTLAND YARD... NEVER SAW A BODY SO MANGLED AS THIS!

KING HARAT, EH? I SUPPOSE THERE'S SOME KIND OF CURSE... THE PRESS WOULD LOVE THAT!

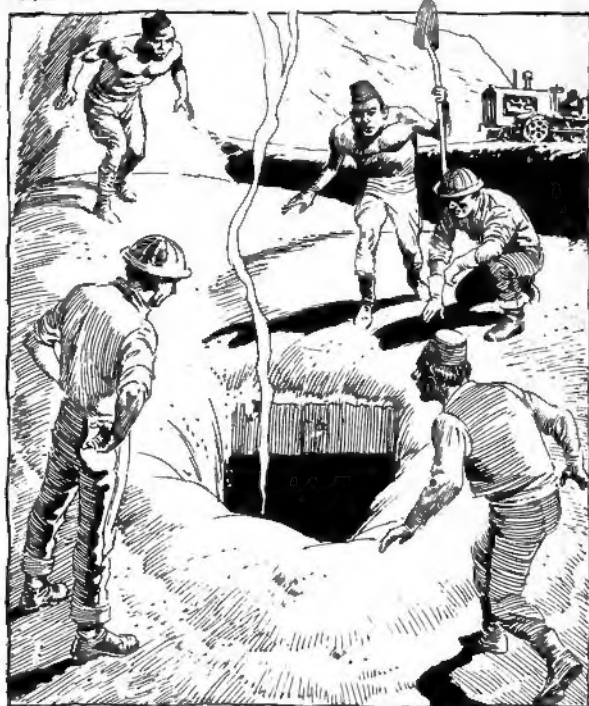
TO MY KNOWLEDGE, INSPECTOR NIGEL, THERE'S NO CURSE CONNECTED WITH HARAT-ANKNEB... BUT HE'S ONE OF THE GREATEST PRIZES OF THE MUSEUM!

BIT UNUSUAL TO FIND ONE *THIS* WELL PRESERVED, ISN'T IT, PROFESSOR?

IT'S *REMARKABLE!* MADE HIS DISCOVERY A MILESTONE IN ARCHEOLOGY! THE WHOLE CIRCUMSTANCES AROUND HARAT ARE REMARKABLE...



"NO ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION FOUND HIS TOMB, BUT A CREW OF ENGINEERS, BLASTING A DAM SITE... IT WAS FAR REMOVED FROM ANY BURIAL GROUNDS, UNMARKED, TOTALLY OBSCURED... COMPLETELY HIDDEN..."



"NATIVE WORKERS FLED THE SITE AND COULD NOT BE PERSUADED TO RETURN UNTIL LONG AFTER THE MUMMY HAD BEEN SHIPPED TO ENGLAND! IT WAS MY GOOD FORTUNE TO HAVE BEEN DIGGING SOME MILES TO THE SOUTH... I WAS CALLED UPON TO INSPECT THE TOMB..."



"IT WAS SINGULAR! NO INSCRIPTIONS ON THE WALLS, NO EFFECTS OF THE DECEASED... NOTHING COMMON TO AN EGYPTIAN TOMB! NOT EVEN A SOUL DOOR FOR THE DEPARTING SPIRIT! JUST THE SARCOPHAGUS BEARING HARAT'S NAME..."

"BUT THE UNCONVENTIONALITIES OF THE TOMB WERE FORGOTTEN WHEN I PRIED OPEN THE SARCOPHAGUS... THE MARVELS OF EGYPTIAN EMBALMING ASIDE, THE PRESERVATION WAS FANTASTIC! LIKE SOMETHING BURIED FOR 100 YEARS, NOT 3,000! THE FIND OF A CENTURY!"





THAT WAS ALMOST A MONTH AGO, AND NOW ...THIS KILLING!

IF THERE'S SOME CONNECTION, PROFESSOR BRUCE, REST ASSURED WE'LL FIND IT OUT!

SERGEANT! I WANT A MAN ON DUTY IN THIS WING AT ALL TIMES! YOU TAKE THE EVENING WATCH... YOUNG SOAMES WILL RELIEVE YOU AT MIDNIGHT!

AYE, SIR!

I'LL SEE HOW MY SQUAD IS DOING WITH THEIR CHECK OF THE GROUNDS AND THE ROOF... BY THEN THE CORONER MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL US ABOUT THE GUARD'S BODY...

...IF THERE'S ENOUGH LEFT OF THE CORPSE TO TELL HIM ANYTHING!

MIDNIGHT...

READY TO RELIEVE YOU, SERGEANT...

I'M GLAD OF IT, M'LAD! MOONLIGHT COMING THROUGH THESE WINDOWS MAKES THIS EGYPTIAN BRIC-A-BRAC CAST SOME WEIRD SHADOWS... PUTS A MAN ON EDGE!



BLAST THE SERGEANT ANYWAY!  
DOES HE TAKE ME FOR A ROOKIE  
HE CAN FRIGHTEN? STILL...THE  
MOONLIGHT DOES MAKE IT  
LOOK S-SPOOKY...



NEXT, I'LL BE SEEING SOMETHING  
BEHIND EVERY STATUE I PA...

THE ARM!  
I-IT WASN'T  
LIKE THAT  
BEFORE!



NO -- DEAR  
GOD-- NO!





MORNING...

I'VE HUNTED IN INDIA...  
SEEN MEN MAULED BY  
TIGERS... IT WASN'T  
**THIS** BAD! HE WAS JUST  
A BOY... NEW TO THE  
FORCE...

YOU MUSTN'T BLAME  
YOURSELF, INSPECTOR!  
THE KILLINGS TOOK  
PLACE IN MY WING  
OF THE MUSEUM...  
I FEEL JUST AS  
RESPONSIBLE AS YOU!

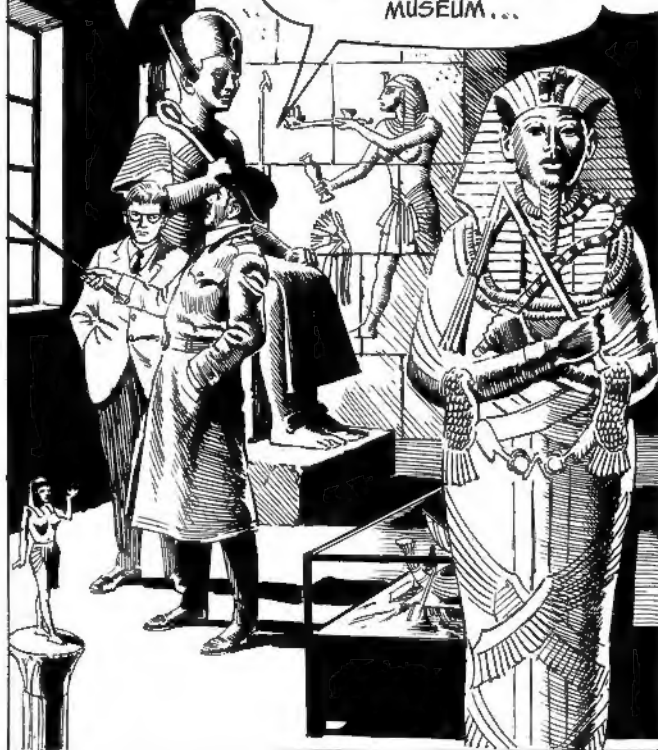
TONIGHT WILL BE  
DIFFERENT...  
TONIGHT I'LL TAKE  
THE LATE WATCH...



I MUST INSIST  
YOU LET ME  
ACCOMPANY  
YOU, INSPECTOR!

WINDOWS LOCKED FROM INSIDE  
AND UNTAMPERED WITH...MY  
MEN WERE POSTED OUTSIDE  
...THE KILLER **HAS** TO BE  
SOMEWHERE IN THE  
MUSEUM...

...AND TONIGHT, WE'LL BE  
WAITING FOR HIM!



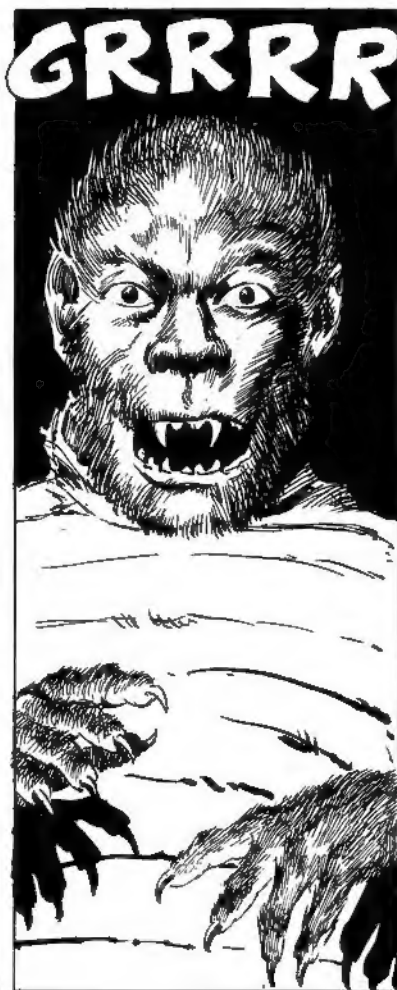
OUTSIDE, A TOWER CLOCK TOLLED TWELVE...  
WITHIN THE EGYPTIAN WING, TWO SETS OF  
FOOTSTEPS ECHOED ON THE MARBLE FLOOR...

THE MOONLIGHT PROVIDES A GOOD  
DEAL OF ILLUMINATION... SHOULD  
HELP WITH OUR TASK...



GETTING LATE... THE  
KILLER MAY HAVE BEEN  
FRIGHTENED OFF BECAUSE  
THERE ARE TWO OF...

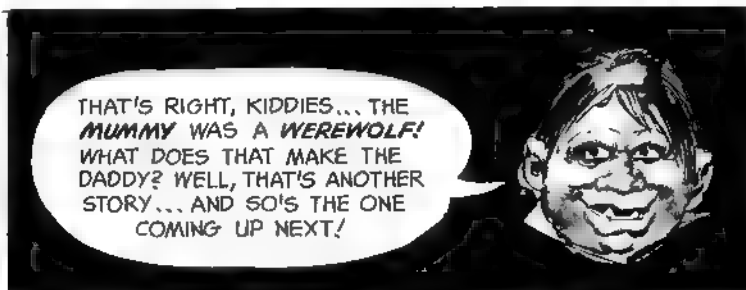
**NIGEL!** THE  
SARCOPHAGUS...  
**GOOD LORD!!**







A sudden stench of decay stung the nostrils of the two men... stretched out on the floor before them, HARAT-ANKNEB WAS UNDERGOING HIS LAST TRANSFORMATION.





**HEE, HEE, HEE!** JUST DUST THE RUST FROM THAT MUSTY OLD CUSTOMER, AND HAVE A SEAT! DRAW UP CLOSE TO THE TABLE, FRIEND, 'CAUSE WE'RE DISHING UP A SEVEN-COURSE SERVING OF TERROR! WITH AN ENTREE' COMPRISED OF GLOOM AND FEAR, A MIXED SOUP COURSE OF BLOOD AND WATER, AND A HUGE HELPING OF HORROR FOR THE MAIN DISH, YOU WON'T BE IN ANY CONDITION TO SAMPLE THE DESERT, A VERY SPECIAL TID-BIT CALLED...

# the BLOOD FRUIT!

THROUGH THE WET, GRAY MIST OF NIGHT, A TALL AND SILENT SAIL YACHT GHOSTS INTO THE PROTECTIVE SOUTH SEA ISLAND COVE, AND DROPS ANCHOR. LYING GENTLY TO HER MOORING, HER CREW OF FIVE MOVE ABOUT HER DECK, FURLING THE YARDS OF CANVAS THAT CRUMPLE OVER HER SPARS UNTIL SHE IS MADE SECURE.

THEN, AND ONLY THEN, IS THE JOY OF A SAFE LANDFALL INVADDED BY THE SINISTER SILENCE...



TESS OBERLIN UNCONSCIOUSLY CLUTCHED HER COLLAR CLOSER ABOUT HER NECK TO WARD OFF AN UNKNOWN CHILL, AND THE MEREST WHISPER OF A BREEZE BRUSHED HER BLONDE TRESSSES BUT DID NOTHING TO DISPEL THE HEAVY AIR. JIM REMINGTON, GEOLOGY MAJOR, WIPED COLD PERSPIRATION FROM HIS FOREHEAD, THE TRACE OF A GRIN TEASING THE CORNERS OF HIS MOUTH, AND ARCHEOLOGIST GEORGE OLDEN NERVOUSLY LIT A CIGARETTE...

HEAVENS: I...I ALWAYS PICTURED A SOUTH SEA ISLE TO BE... WELL...DIFFERENT!

SHAME ON YOU, TESS. AS A NATURALIST, YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SEE THINGS AS THEY ARE!

YES, BUT SHE'S RIGHT. WEIRD LOOK'NG PLACE! I DARE SAY IT WILL LOOK BETTER IN THE SUNSHINE, BUT WELL... COULDN'T HAVE PICKED A BETTER SPOT TO WRITE A THESIS ABOUT... I GUESS!

JERRY BRIGHTBILL, BIOLOGIST, SUMMED IT ALL UP...

I DON'T LIKE IT... I JUST DON'T LIKE THIS PLACE! ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT ISLAND, PROFESSOR?





THE CAPTAIN, PROFESSOR THOMAS BREEN, STOOD TIREDLY AT THE HELM, STARING INTO THE BLACKNESS OF THE TREE-LINED SHORE WHERE, DIMLY VISIBLE, A THIN RIBBON OF BEACH JOINED LAND AND SEA...



YOU STUDENTS SOUND DISMAL BECAUSE YOU'RE TIRED! WE'RE **ALL** TIRED... AND THIS MISERABLE WEATHER IS ENOUGH TO SPOIL ANYTHING! I AGREE WITH GEORGE, THAT IT WILL APPEAR BETTER TOMORROW, SO WHAT SAY WE ALL GET SOME SLEEP, EH?

THE SUN WAS HIGH OVERHEAD WHEN THE LAST BOATLOAD OF SUPPLIES WAS DRAWN UP ON THE BEACH, BUT IN THE AIR THERE STILL LINGERED THE OMINOUS FEELING...

WELL DONE! WELL DONE! BEFORE WE SET UP CAMP, THOUGH, I THINK WE OUGHT TO MAKE AN EXPLORATORY SEARCH OF THE AREA JUST TO SEE WHAT'S AROUND US. WON'T BE ABLE TO DO IT LATER WHEN IT STARTS GETTING DARK, SO EACH OF YOU TAKE A DIFFERENT DIRECTION AND SCOUT AROUND. ALL MEET BACK HERE IN A FEW HOURS.



UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF PROFESSOR BREEN, THE FOUR STUDENTS HAD COME WITH HIM TO THIS LITTLE-KNOWN ISLAND, EACH TO WRITE A THESIS TO EARN THEIR MASTERS DEGREE. NOW THE FOUR GRADUALLY SPREAD APART FROM ONE ANOTHER AS THEY BEGAN THE EXPLORATION, AND THE PROFESSOR BUSIED HIMSELF, SETTING UP CAMP...



THROUGH THE LONG, HUMID DAY THE CAMPSITE GRADUALLY CAME TO RESEMBLE AN ORGANIZED ARRANGEMENT OF TENTS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, AND EACH OF THE STUDENTS RETURNED WITH THEIR BITS OF STORIES, THAT HOPEFULLY, BUT VAINLY, WOULD DISPEL THE SOMEWHAT GLOOMY ATMOSPHERE. NIGHT CAME AGAIN, AND WHILE THE OTHERS SLEPT, JERRY BRIGHTBILL SAT GUARD BY THE FIRE, WRITING NOTES UNTIL ...



HI, PROFESSOR! WORKING LATE TONIGHT, AREN'T YOU?

YES, JERRY... SO MANY THINGS TO DO! ANY COFFEE AVAILABLE?

THE PROFESSOR'S EYES SUDDENLY NARROWED, HIS GAZE LINGERING ON THE SHINY RED FRUIT JERRY WAS EATING!

COFFEE? SURE, PROFESSOR... NEVER MIND, JERRY! STILL SOME LEFT... TELL ME... WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE EATING?



CASUALLY, THE YOUNG MAN HANDED SOME OF THE BERRIES TO THE PROFESSOR, WHO EXAMINED THEM IN THE FIRELIGHT. HIS PARTICULAR FIELD OF STUDY WAS BOTANY, AND HE WAS EXPERT, BUT THOUGH HE HAD NEVER SEEN THIS TYPE OF FRUIT, IN THE BACK OF HIS MIND SOMEWHERE, SOMETHING WAS TRYING TO MAKE HIM REMEMBER...

IT'S ONLY SOME KIND OF BERRY I FOUND WHILE OUT ON THAT HIKE TODAY! THEY'RE DELICIOUS!

OF COURSE! **NOW** I REMEMBER!



RISING QUICKLY TO HIS FEET, PROFESSOR BREEN CLUTCHED THE BERRIES PRECIOUSLY IN HIS HANDS AND RUSHED FROM THE CAMPFIRE...

PROFESSOR! ANYTHING WRONG?!



IN THE PRIVACY OF HIS TENT, THE PROFESSOR SEARCHED THROUGH HIS FOOTLOCKER, PORING THROUGH NUMEROUS OLD NOTEBOOKS, UNTIL...

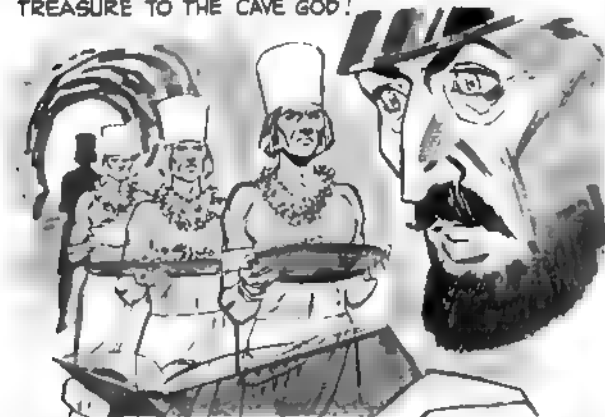
**AH!** I KNEW IT! I WROTE THESE NOTES TWELVE YEARS AGO...NOTES ABOUT THIS ISLAND, ABOUT ITS HISTORY AND LEGENDS, TOLD TO ME BY AN OLD AND DYING ISLANDER!



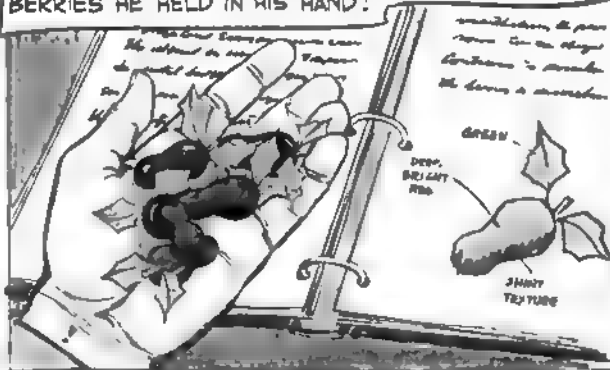
INTENSELY EXCITED, THE PROFESSOR READ HIS NOTES, HIS MIND PICTURING LIFE ON THIS TINY ISLAND WHEN IT WAS INHABITED BY A PEOPLE NOW EXTINCT, WHO WORSHIPPED AND OFFERED HUMAN SACRIFICE TO A CAVE-DWELLING, REPTILE-LIKE BEING!



THE HIGH PRIESTS OF THE TRIBE WERE ALL-POWERFUL, FOR IT WAS THEY WHO CHOSE THE HUMANS TO BE SACRIFICED, BUT THE TRIBESPEOPLE DID NOT BELIEVE SUCH DEATH TO BE A GREAT HONOR AS IT WAS IN OTHER CULTURES AND WOULD OFTEN RUN AWAY WHEN THE HIGH PRIESTS COULD NOT OFFER A HUMAN SACRIFICE, THEY INSTEAD OFFERED MUCH MATERIAL TREASURE TO THE CAVE GOD!



BUT AT SOME POINT IN THEIR HISTORY, A DISCOVERY WAS MADE, OF A POWER THAT ALLOWED THE HIGH PRIESTS TO CONTROL THOSE CHOSEN TO BE SACRIFICED, AND FROM THAT TIME, THE NUMBERS OF THE HAPPY, CARE-FREE ISLANDERS DWINDLED RAPIDLY! THE POWER WAS SUPPOSEDLY CONTAINED IN A BERRY WHICH THE NATIVES CALLED "**THE BLOOD FRUIT**"... AND THERE ON THE PAGES OF THE PROFESSOR'S NOTEBOOK, WAS A CRUDE DRAWING, UNMISTAKEABLY PICTURING THE BERRIES HE HELD IN HIS HAND!



THE PROFESSOR THOUGHT FOR LONG MOMENTS, THEN CLOSED THE NOTEBOOK AND PUT IT AWAY. HE STEPPED TO THE ENTRANCE OF HIS TENT AND CALLED JERRY TO COME INSIDE. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONING, THE STUDENT IDENTIFIED THE PLACE ON THE MAP WHERE HE FOUND THE BERRIES...

RIGHT ABOUT HERE, PROFESSOR! NEAR THE MOUTH OF SOME OLD CAVE! WHY?

**A CAVE!**?

ER...NOTHING, JERRY! NOTHING WORTH TALKING ABOUT. I... I WAS MISTAKEN... IT'S NOTHING AT ALL! YOU GET SOME SLEEP... I'LL STAND WATCH!



GRATEFULLY, THE WEARY STUDENT LEFT THE TENT, LEAVING THE PROFESSOR ALONE WITH HIS RACING THOUGHTS. THE PROFESSOR TASTED ONE BERRY...

I NEVER DREAMED THESE NOTES HAD ANY **REAL** BASIS IN FACT! WHY, DISCOVERY OF THIS FRUIT WOULD MAKE ME FAMOUS! IT'S AN ENTIRELY NEW SPECIES! IF ONLY I HAD BEEN THE ONE TO FIND IT! TOMORROW, THAT FOOL STUDENT WILL TELL THE OTHERS ABOUT TONIGHT AND I'LL HAVE TO GIVE **HIM** THE CREDIT! IF ONLY THERE WAS A WAY TO KEEP HIM QUIET ABOUT IT...FOREVER! IF ONLY HE WERE TO DIE!





THE LONG HOURS OF NIGHT PASSED QUIETLY INTO A DAWN THAT FOUND THE PROFESSOR STRETCHED OUT ON HIS COT, DISHEVELED AND WET WITH PERSPIRATION, RUDELY BEING AWAKENED BY TESS AND JIM...

PROFESSOR!  
WAKE UP!  
WAKE UP!

WHA...WHO...  
WHAT...  
WHAT'S THE  
MATTER?

IT'S JERRY,  
PROFESSOR!  
WE THINK  
HE'S DEAD!



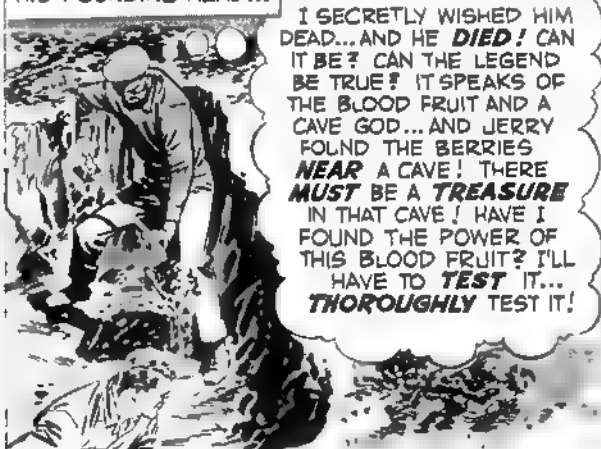
GROGGILY, THE PROFESSOR HASTENED TO THE TENT JERRY SHARED WITH THE OTHER MALE STUDENTS, AND THERE HIS TREMBLING HANDS AFFIRMED THE FACT THAT, INDEED, THE YOUNG BIOLOGIST LIVED NO MORE...

HE NEVER WOKE GEORGE OR MYSELF TO TAKE OVER OUR SENTRY DUTY DURING THE NIGHT. WHEN WE AWOKE THIS MORNING, THIS IS HOW WE FOUND HIM!

YES...YES, I SEE.  
PROBABLY A  
HEART ATTACK...  
MUST HAVE BEEN  
A HEART ATTACK!  
HE JUST DIED...  
QUIETLY...IN HIS  
SLEEP!



THE FUNERAL SERVICES WERE SIMPLE, AND THEN THE THREE MEN CARRIED THE BODY SOME DISTANCE AWAY TO A SUITABLE SITE AND BEGAN THE BURIAL. IN SILENCE, THEY DUG AWAY THE SOFT, MOIST EARTH, AND THE PROFESSOR'S THOUGHTS TUMBLED THROUGH HIS POUNDING HEAD...



I SECRETLY WISHED HIM DEAD...AND HE **DIED**! CAN IT BE? CAN THE LEGEND BE TRUE? IT SPEAKS OF THE BLOOD FRUIT AND A CAVE GOD...AND JERRY FOUND THE BERRIES **NEAR** A CAVE! THERE **MUST** BE A **TREASURE** IN THAT CAVE! HAVE I FOUND THE POWER OF THIS BLOOD FRUIT? I'LL HAVE TO **TEST** IT... **THOROUGHLY** TEST IT!

HE KNEW THE SPEECH WAS TRITE, BUT HE FELT HE NEEDED IT TO JUSTIFY HIS TAKING THEM ON ANOTHER EXPLORATORY TREK, FOLLOWING AS CLOSELY AS HE COULD, THE ROUTE TOLD HIM BY JERRY, UNTIL...

LOOK! A  
CAVE!

YES...I THINK THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD PLACE TO START OUR WORK. GEORGE, THE REST OF US WILL REMAIN HERE, BUT I WANT YOU TO THOROUGHLY EXPLORE THE CAVE FOR US.

ALL RIGHT,  
PROFESSOR.



THE TRIO COMPLETED THEIR TASK AND RETURNED TO CAMP WHERE TESS HAD BEEN WAITING. THE PROFESSOR NOW **KNEW** HE WANTED THE TREASURE FOR HIMSELF, HE WANTED THE POWER THE BLOOD FRUIT COULD GIVE HIM. HE **HUNGERED** FOR THE FAME AND WEALTH AND POWER THAT MIGHT SOON BE HIS...

I KNOW HOW YOU ALL MUST FEEL...BUT WE MUST BUSY OURSELVES TO KEEP UP OUR SPIRITS, AND, AS TRUE SCIENTISTS, WE HAVE A DUTY TO CONTINUE ON IN THE FACE OF HARDSHIP...



THE YOUNG ARCHEOLOGY STUDENT EAGERLY ENTERED THE YAWNING BLACK MOUTH OF THE CAVE. WHILE JIM AND TESS SAT TALKING QUIETLY BY THEMSELVES, THE TIME PASSED AND THEN, UNNOTICED, THE PROFESSOR ATE ONE BERRY...

**NOW, GEORGE!**  
NOW I WANT YOU TO  
**DIE!** I WANT YOU TO DIE  
A DEATH SO  
UNUSUAL, IT COULDN'T  
**POSSIBLY** BE AN  
ACCIDENT OR  
COINCIDENCE! **DIE!**



A MOMENT LATER, FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE CAVE, THERE CAME A TERRIFYING SHRIEK OF AGONY! THE PROFESSOR AND THE TWO STUDENTS STOOD FROZEN IN FEAR...

**IT'S GEORGE!**



PROFESSOR BREEN'S HEART LEAPED WITH ANTICIPATED DELIGHT! HE FELT HE HAD FOUND THE SECRET POWER OF THE BLOOD FRUIT... THE POWER TO RULE BY IMPOSING HIS WILL ON OTHERS! HE FOLLOWED AS THE TWO STUDENTS RUSHED HEADLONG INTO THE CAVE, CALLING TO THEIR FRIEND, BUT RECEIVING NO REPLY. DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE CAVE THEY CAME UPON A CHAMBER...

LOOK AT THESE CARVINGS! THIS MUST BE...

NEVER MIND THE CARVINGS, PROFESSOR! IT'S GEORGE WE'RE TRYING TO...

**EEE-EEE-EEK!**



THE GIRL'S SCREAM OF TERROR ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED FROM THE WALLS AND LABYRINTHS, ASSAULTING THEIR EARDRUMS! THEIR EYES FOLLOWED HER POINTING FINGER TO THE POOL IN THE CENTER OF THE CHAMBER... FROM IT, GROTESQUELY CLUTCHING NOTHING, THERE PROTRUDED...

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, GET HIM OUT! QUICKLY!

**A HAND!**



MURRIEDLY, JIM STEPPED INTO THE WATER, REACHED DOWN AND GRASPED THE WRIST. HE PULLED UPWARD, EXPECTING A GREAT WEIGHT, BUT THERE WAS NOTHING... ONLY A FOREARM!

**GREAT SCOTT! HE'S BEEN TORN APART!**



IN HORROR, JIM REMINGTON STARED AT THE BRUTALLY GRUESOME SIGHT, AND AS HIS STOMACH KNOTTED IN REVULSION, HE QUICKLY DROPPED IT BACK INTO THE WATER, NEVER NOTICING THE STRING OF GLISTENING GEMS THAT WAS ATTACHED... BUT THE PROFESSOR NOTICED...

**THE TREASURE! THE TREASURE! I'VE FOUND IT!**



**I'VE FOUND IT!** I KNEW THIS WAS THE SACRIFICIAL CHAMBER! THIS IS WHERE THEY OFFERED THEIR RICHES TO THE CAVE GOD! I'VE FOUND IT!

**PROFESSOR! STOP!** WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! SOMEONE... SOME **THING** IN HERE **KILLED GEORGE!** WHATEVER IT IS IT'S STILL HERE! WE HAVE TO **LEAVE!**



LEAVE!?! **HA HA HA!** WHEN I'VE **FOUND** MY TREASURE? NO... WE'LL NOT LEAVE JUST YET; NOT 'TIL I EMPTY THIS POOL OF ITS WEALTH. NOT BEFORE I'M **RICH!**

PROFESSOR! YOU'RE TALKING LIKE A MADMAN! WE'VE GOT TO GET **OUT** OF HERE!

**PLEASE, PROFESSOR!** I'M FRIGHTENED!

YOU'VE NOTHING TO FEAR! THERE'S NO SUPERNATURAL BEING HERE THAT CAN HARM YOU... EXCEPT **ME**, AS LONG AS YOU DO AS I SAY, I WON'T KILL YOU! I **HAD** TO KILL GEORGE. IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO BE CERTAIN I KNEW THE SECRET POWER OF THE BLOOD FRUIT!

PROFESSOR, STOP IT! **C'MON**, NOW! WE'RE TAKING YOU OUT OF HERE!

DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO! I HAVE A POWER! A SECRET POWER! AND I CAN **KILL** YOU WITH IT! KILLED GEORGE WITH IT! YOU HELP ME EMPTY THIS POOL OF ITS TREASURE, OR I'LL...

JIM, HE'S INSANE! HE'S ABSOLUTELY **INSANE!**

I'M **NOT** INSANE! I'VE WAITED ALL MY LIFE FOR FAME AND... AND WEALTH... **RICHES!** **POWER!** I WON'T BE CHEAT...

**UNNGF!**

RUN, TESS! **RUN!**

**SPRAWLED** INTO THE POOL, GASPING AND CHOKING THE DAZED AND SHAKEN PROFESSOR GROPES AND STRUGGLES TO REGAIN HIS FEET WHILE THE YOUNG COUPLE RACE FROM THE CHAMBER...





YOU...YOU WON'T GET AWAY! (GASP!) I CAN KILL YOU! (GASP!) I **WILL** KILL YOU...ANYTIME I WANT TO! YOU CAN'T GET AWAY...(GASP!) AND... AND YOU WON'T KEEP ME FROM MY TREASURE!

WILDLY FURIOUS, THE PROFESSOR SEARCHES WITH BOTH HANDS IN THE MURKY, STAGNANT WATER...



**AH!** HERE'S SOMETHING! OH...JUST A PIECE OF COLORED GLASS!

AGAIN AND AGAIN THE CRAZED AND GREEDY HANDS CLUTCHED FROM THE POOL,VARIOUS BITS AND FRAGMENTS, SHINY AND BRIGHT...BUT WORTHLESS!

...BRIGHT STONES...BAUBLES...TRINKETS! HANDFUL AFTER HANDFUL...ALL USELESS BITS OF JUNK!



SOON THE EDGES OF THE POOL ARE HEAPED WITH SCATTERED CLUMPS OF THE LEGENDARY "TREASURE"!

**JUNK!** IT'S ALL JUNK! WORTHLESS, USELESS **GARBAGE!**

IT CAN'T BE TRUE! THERE MUST BE **SOMETHING...** SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST **JUNK!**



AND, INDEED, THERE **IS**...



IN FANTASTIC DISBELIEF, PROFESSOR BREEN STUMBLED BACKWARD, AS FROM THE POOL, THE MASSIVE ROCK FORMATION SHUDDERED...MOVED...ROSE...UNTIL THE LEGENDARY CAVE-GOD TOWERED MENACINGLY OVER HIM...

YOU...YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KILLED GEORGE! MY COMMAND BROUGHT YOU INTO BEING! IT **MUST** BE SO! YOU WERE THE WEAPON OF MY WILL!



SOFTLY, A CHUCKLE ROSE IN HIS THROAT AND QUICKLY GREW TO A MANIACAL LAUGH! THEN HE THRUST HIS HAND INTO HIS SHIRT POCKET, AND BROUGHT FORTH A SHINY RED BERRY...

**HA HA HA!** YOU SEE! THIS BLOOD FRUIT WILL MAKE ME YOUR MASTER! I HAVE ONLY TO EAT AND COMMAND YOU! **HAHA!**



THE YOUNG GEOLOGIST REACHED INTO HIS POCKET, LISTENING AND GLANCING INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE CAVE FOR SOME SIGN OF THE PROFESSOR, AND HANDED TO THE GIRL SEVERAL SHINY, RED BERRIES...

HERE, TESS, TAKE THESE. JERRY GAVE THEM TO ME... THEY'RE DELICIOUS, AND RICH WITH SUGAR. THEY'LL HELP CALM YOUR NERVOUS STOMACH... GIVE YOU SOME ENERGY, TOO!

... SO SICK OF THIS PLACE! FIRST JERRY DYING... THEN GEORGE... AND PROFESSOR BREEN SAYING HE WANTS TO KILL US! WHY DO WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR HIM? WHY CAN'T WE JUST **LEAVE**!



AND AT THAT MOMENT, THEY HEARD THE PROFESSOR'S HORRIBLY UGLY AND BLOOD-CHILLING SCREAM ERUPTING FROM DEEP IN THE CAVE...



AT THE CAVE ENTRANCE, JIM AND TESS PAUSED TO REST. THEY LEANED AGAINST THE ROCK, GULPING GREAT BREATHS OF AIR...

WE'LL WAIT FOR HIM. HE'LL COME TO HIS SENSES. HE'S... HE'S TOO INTELLIGENT TO **REALLY** BELIEVE THOSE THINGS HE SAID!

I DON'T CARE! HE'S FRIGHTENED ME TO DEATH! I'M... I'M SO EXHAUSTED... SORRY I EVER CAME HERE! AND MY STOMACH... ALMOST SICK.



DRYING HER EYES, TESS BEGAN EATING THE SWEET AND LUSCIOUS BERRIES, PUTTING THEM IN HER MOUTH ONE AFTER ANOTHER...

OH, TESS, HONEY... WE AT LEAST HAVE TO GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO...

OH, I DON'T **CARE** ABOUT HIM! I'M SO FRIGHTENED AND... AND SO MISERABLE, I **WISH HE WERE DEAD!**



WELL, THAT'S IT, DINNER GUESTS! THAT PROFESSOR WASN'T JUST ABSENT-MINDED... HE LOST HIS MIND COMPLETELY! BUT HE REALLY SHOULDN'T FEEL TOO BAD... HE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE PART OF THE "IN" CROWD... AND AFTER THAT CAVE GOD TOOK A COUPLE OF MOUTHFULS, THE PROFESSOR WAS CROWDED AS FAR **IN** AS HE COULD BE! **HEE, HEE, HEE!** SEE YOU NEXT TIME, GANG... AND HEARTY APPETITE!

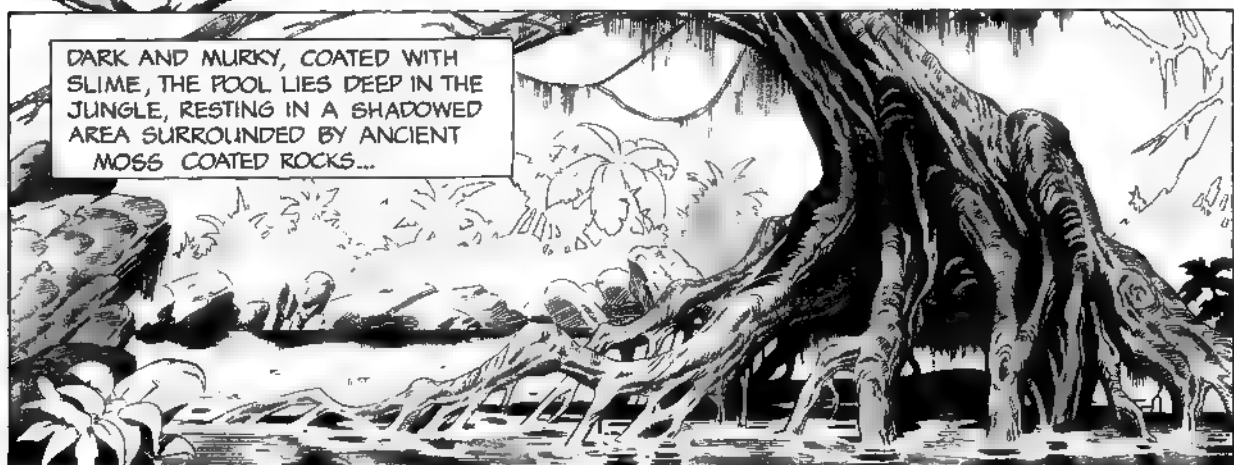




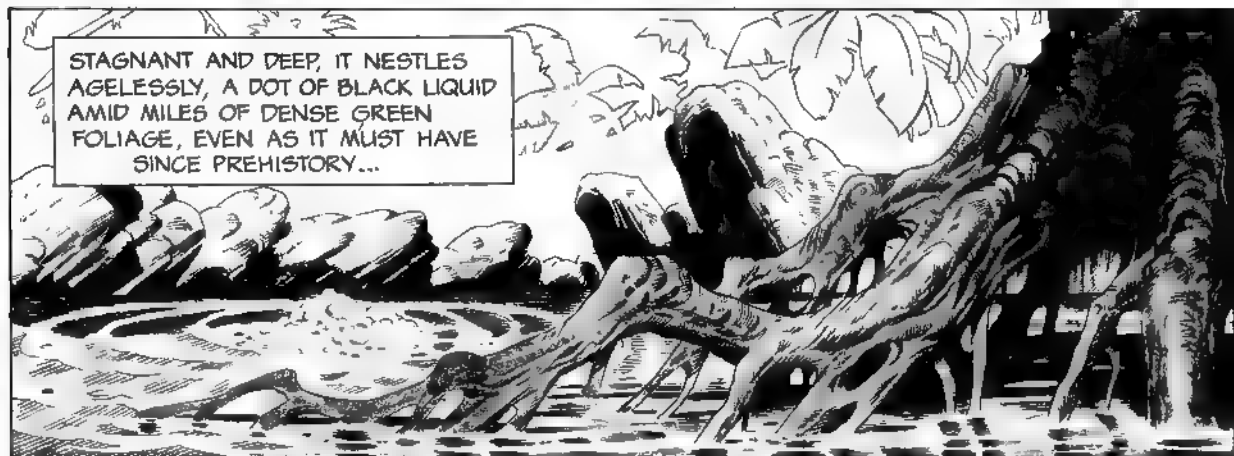
PRESS FORWARD, MERRY MONSTERS...PUSH OVER THE UNDERBRUSH ( OR IS IT, UNDER THE OVERBRUSH ? ) UNTIL WE REACH THE DESOLATE SPOT WHERE I'VE ARRANGED AN APPOINTMENT FOR YOU WITH...

# IT THAT LURKS!

DARK AND MURKY, COATED WITH SLIME, THE POOL LIES DEEP IN THE JUNGLE, RESTING IN A SHADOWED AREA SURROUNDED BY ANCIENT MOSS COATED ROCKS...



STAGNANT AND DEEP, IT NESTLES AGELESSLY, A DOT OF BLACK LIQUID AMID MILES OF DENSE GREEN FOLIAGE, EVEN AS IT MUST HAVE SINCE PREHISTORY...



UNCHANGED AND UNSPOILED, IT WAITS, NURTURING UNKNOWN HORROR BENEATH A PLACID SURFACE, TO BE THRUST FORTH ON THE UNSUSPECTING AND UNPREPARED!



ADKINS



SUCH ARE MY THOUGHTS AS I CLING UNBELIEVINGLY TO THE BINOCULARS, WITH MOIST PALMS, BUT MY THROAT IS TOO TIGHTLY CONSTRICTED WITH EXCITEMENT FOR MORE THAN A CHOKED WHISPER TO DR. SERNAS OF...

...MY GOD!

WAS I WRONG, RAMSEY?  
ISN'T IT EVERYTHING I  
SAID IT TO BE?

CAN YOU COMPREHEND  
WHAT THIS MEANS TO  
ME AS A NATURLIST?  
AN UNDISCOVERED  
SPECIES! IT'S SOME-  
THING YOU DREAM  
ABOUT...ONE OF THE  
MAIN PURPOSES IN THE  
EXPEDITION COMING TO  
THIS AREA... AND I'VE  
DONE IT!

I STILL CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO  
SPEAK. YOU WHO HAVE READ MY  
BOOKS KNOW OF MY HUNTING  
EXPERIENCES, OF THE WIDE VARIETY  
OF WILD LIFE I'VE STALKED... YET,  
THIS... THIS THING INSPIRES A FEAR  
AND AWE IN ME BEYOND BELIEF...

THERE WAS SOME-  
THING ABOUT THIS  
POOL WHEN I  
STUMBLED ON IT  
YESTERDAY...I KNEW  
IT HAD TO HOLD SOME  
SECRET...AND WHEN  
I SAW...

...UNTIL I CAN NO LONGER STAND LOOKING!

BUT WHY BRING JUST ME, DOCTOR? THE  
WHOLE CAMP SHOULD BE OUT FOR THIS...  
WHAT CAN THE TWO OF US DO?

WE CAN CAPTURE IT, RAMSEY!  
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE ON THE  
EXPEDITION WITH THE ABILITY TO DO IT!

THIS IS LOADED WITH  
TRANQUILIZING PELLETS...  
YOU CAN DOWN IT! I  
KNOW YOU CAN!

DOCTOR, THAT  
CREATURE'S  
BEYOND OUR  
REALM OF  
EXPERIENCE...  
WHO KNOWS  
WHAT CAN OR  
CAN'T AFFECT  
IT...

THE EXPEDITION IS ALL BUT CONCLUDED, READY TO STRIKE CAMP... WITH THE END IN SIGHT, WHY SHOULD I TAKE UNNECESSARY RISKS, ESPECIALLY AGAINST A QUANTITY SO UNKNOWN AS THIS...

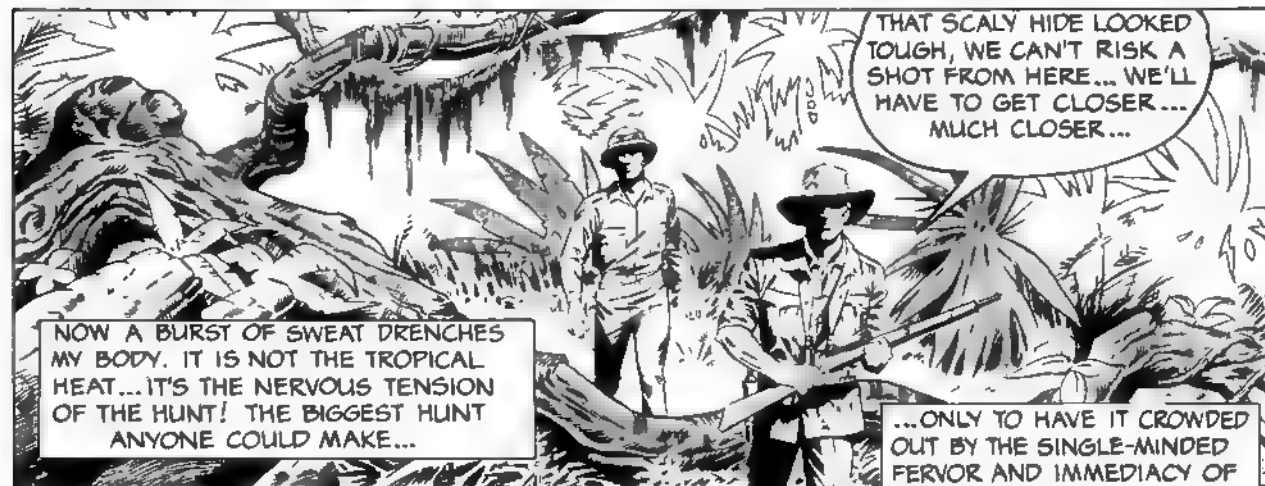
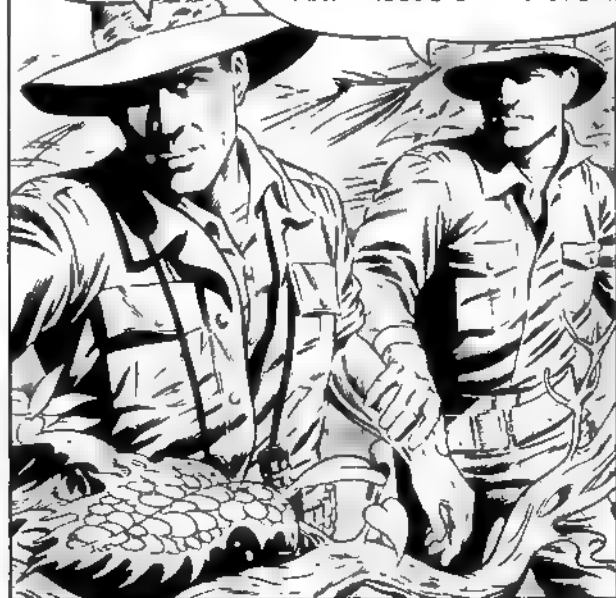
I ACHIEVE TO BE OUT OF HERE, BACK IN CIVILIZATION, YET IT DOESN'T COMPARE TO THIS PITIFUL, DRIVING NEED OF SERNAS...

...WE'RE GOING TO NEED ALL THE OTHERS BEFORE WE TACKLE THAT THING!

RAMSEY, TRY TO UNDERSTAND... I MADE THE DISCOVERY, THE MOMENT SHOULD BE MINE ALONE! ALL MY LIFE I'VE HAD TO SETTLE FOR BITS AND PIECES OF THE GLORY...

RIISING OUT OF THAT POOL IS THE FULFILLMENT OF EVERY HOPE I EVER HAD... DON'T MAKE ME SHARE SOMETHING AS IMPORTANT AS THAT!

ALL RIGHT, DOCTOR. I JUST HOPE THAT MONSTER LURKING OUT THERE IS AS BIG A PUSHOVER AS I AM!



THAT SCALY HIDE LOOKED TOUGH, WE CAN'T RISK A SHOT FROM HERE... WE'LL HAVE TO GET CLOSER... MUCH CLOSER...

NOW A BURST OF SWEAT DRENCHES MY BODY. IT IS NOT THE TROPICAL HEAT... IT'S THE NERVOUS TENSION OF THE HUNT! THE BIGGEST HUNT ANYONE COULD MAKE...

...ONLY TO HAVE IT CROWDED OUT BY THE SINGLE-MINDED FERVOR AND IMMEDIACY OF DR. SERNAS'S MISSION. HIS MOMENT OF TRIUMPH IS AT HAND... IF I CAN GAIN IT FOR HIM!

AS WE MOVE SILENTLY THROUGH THE VERDANT UNDERGROWTH, MY OWN THOUGHTS REEL WITH WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO ME... I SEE MY WIFE SMILING, LAUGHING... I SMELL HER PERFUME, SENSE HER WARMTH AND CLOSENESS...



HERE! IT'LL HAVE TO BE FROM HERE!

THE JUNGLE IS WITHOUT SOUND. THERE IS NO BREEZE. EVERYTHING IS PERFECTLY STILL, IT HAS BEEN SINCE THAT SHINY REPTILIAN HEAD BROKE THE POOL'S MURKY SURFACE. THERE IS ONLY MY BREATHING, MUCH TOO FAST... I TREMBLE SLIGHTLY, LIKE A NOVICE LINING UP HIS FIRST KILL...

THERE IS NOT EVEN A RIPPLE ON THAT BLACK, STAGNANT WATER, THE MONSTER IS PERFECTLY STILL, AS THOUGH IT WERE AWARE OF OUR PRESENCE AND COULDN'T CARE LESS, NOW THE GREAT HEAD SLOWLY TURNS TOWARD US...

JUST ONE, SERNAS... ONE IS ALL WE'LL HAVE TIME FOR...

NOW, RAMSEY, NOW!

SERNAS! SHUT UP!





THERE IS NO CRY, NO SCREAM. NO THUNDEROUS BELLOW OF A STRICKEN GIANT. ONLY A SOFT BUBBLING AS THE HUGE BULK SUBMERGES INTO THE INKY DEPTHS...



RAMSEY! IT'S SINKING! GOING COMPLETELY UNDER!

I WON'T LET IT! NOT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS... IT CAN'T! IT CAN'T!

SERNAS, YOU FOOL! YOU CAN'T STOP IT! THE TRANQUILIZER MAY WEAR OFF... COME BACK!



SERNAS IS A MAN POSSESSED. INSANELY, HE FLAILS INTO THE SLIME-RIDDEN SURFACE, CLUTCHING AND GRASPING AT THE DISAPPEARING MONSTROSITY... IMMERSING HIMSELF FURTHER AND FURTHER INTO THE EBONY DEPTHS...



THE DISCOVERY OF AN AGE! MY DREAM! IT MUSTN'T BE LOST...

...AND TO MY HORROR I REALIZE THE SINKING BEHEMOTH CARRIES THE DOCTOR ALONG WITH HIM...

...MUSTN'T...BE LOST!



EXCEPT FOR SOME SLOW DYING BUBBLES, THE POOL BECAME AS I HAD FIRST SEEN IT, NESTLING AGELESSLY, UNCHANGED AND UNSPOILED...

SERNAS... GOOD LORD!



THERE IS NOTHING LEFT BUT TO RETURN TO CAMP AND TELL THE OTHERS, YET AS I TURN, THERE IS THE CHURNING OF WATER BEHIND ME...

THE PELLET'S WORN OFF ALL READY! MAYBE I CAN GET OFF ONE SHOT BEFORE IT STRIKES...



WHA... LORD!  
OH, LORD...

DARLING, COME TO ME! I NEED YOU SO... COME TO ME NOW!



THE WATER IS COLD, AND THE TUG AND PULL OF THE MOSS AND SLIME IS UNPLEASANT BUT I SMELL HER PERFUME, REVEL IN THE WARMTH OF HER VOICE, AND NEED HER TOO MUCH TO STOP BUT WITH EACH FATAL STEP, THE FULL TRUTH SLOWLY COMES TO ME...

OH, SWEETHEART...ALL THESE MONTHS...LONG, LONG MONTHS...



I MISSED YOU SO... DARLING, DON'T MOVE AWAY...



WE'RE GOING OUT TOO FAR... GETTING TOO DEEP... SWEETHEART...



IT IS NOT THE MONSTER THAT CLAIMED SERNAS, BUT THE POOL! THE POOL THAT WAITS, PATIENTLY, CUNNINGLY...PRODUCING WHATEVER IS MOST EFFECTIVE FOR IT'S PREY TO SEE, THE STRONGEST DESIRE ALWAYS WINNING OUT, DRAGGING IT'S VICTIM IN... EVEN AS THIS DARK, SLIMY MURK NOW CLUTCHES ME...

NOW, IF THAT ISN'T A CASE OF DIRTY POOL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IS! WONDER HOW MANY OTHERS ARE DOWN THERE BESIDES RAMSEY AND SERNAS? TAKE A LOOK... OOPS! THERE'S A READER WHO WON'T GET TO FINISH THIS ISSUE... OH WELL, THINK HOW LUCKY THE REST OF YOU ARE...



IT'S WEIRD WESTERN TIME IN THE *EBER* CORRAL FEAR FOLLOWERS  
TAKE A WRITHING RIDE WITH ME ALONG THE TERROR TRAIL WHICH  
WE'LL BE SHARING WITH THE ...



# DARK RIDER!



DENVER! QUIT SAWKIN'! WE  
GOTTA MAKE IT THROUGH THE  
MOUNTAINS FORE THE SNOW  
GETS TOO HEAVY... YOU  
BEEN SKITTISH AS A COLT  
SINCE WE LEFT THE  
PROSPECTOR!

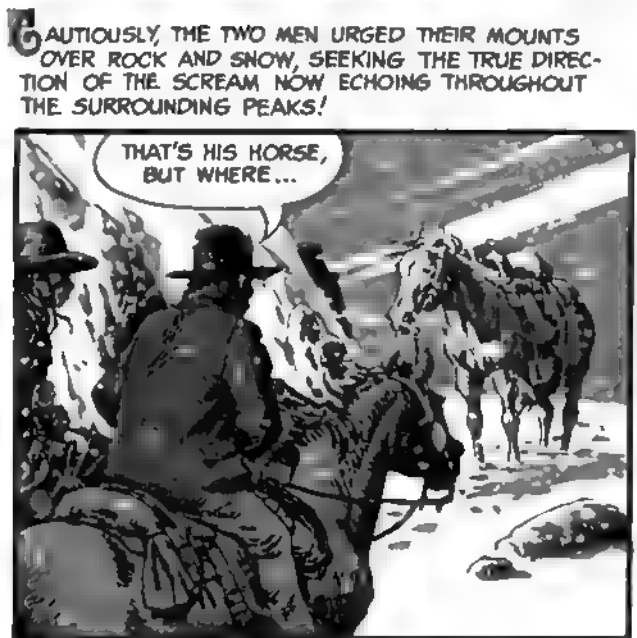
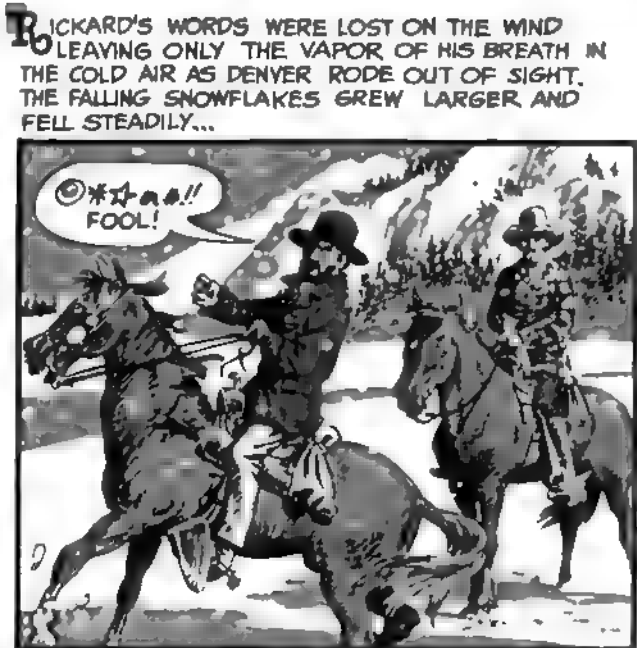
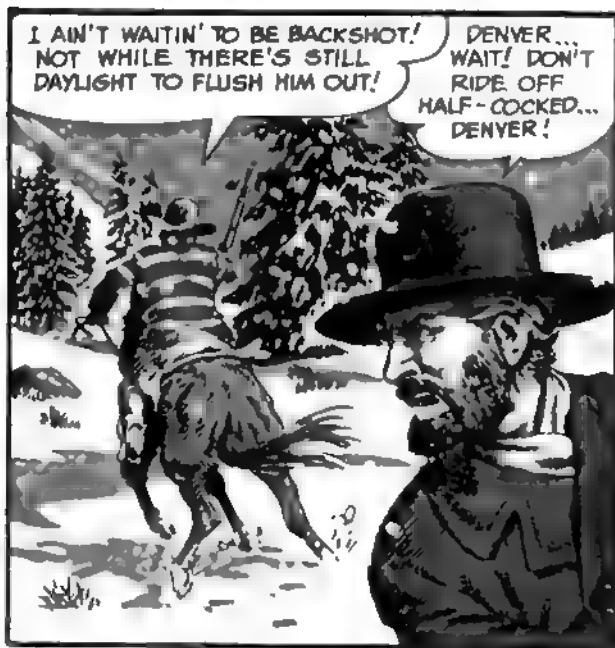
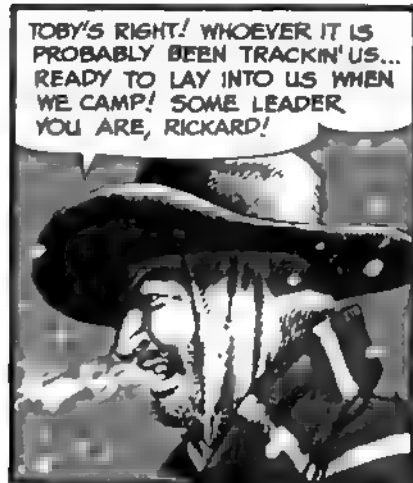
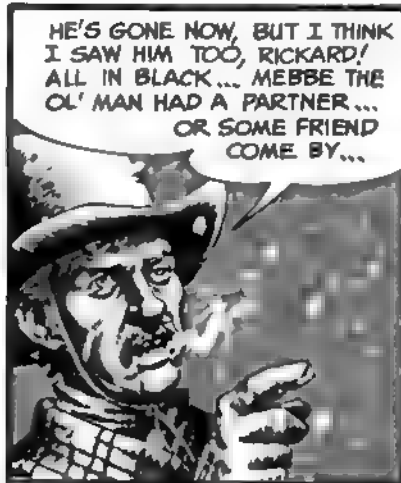
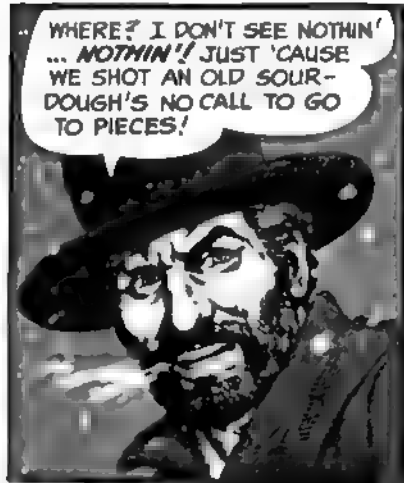
ALL DAY LONG I'VE  
HAD A FEELIN'...  
LIKE WE WAS BEIN'  
FOLLOWED...

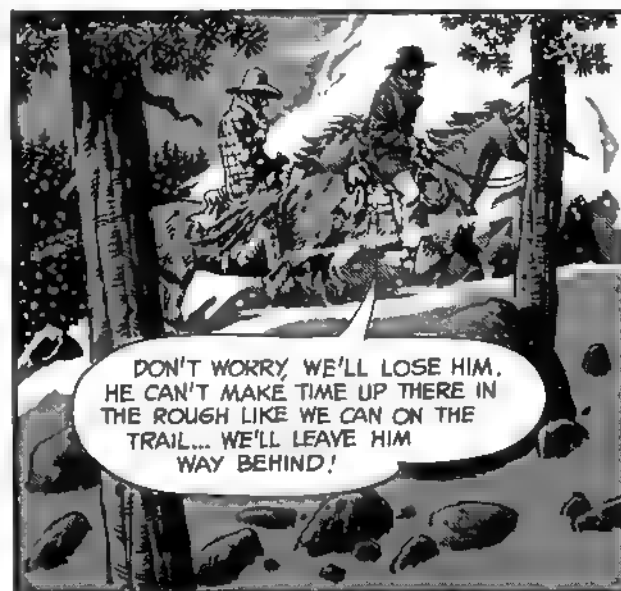
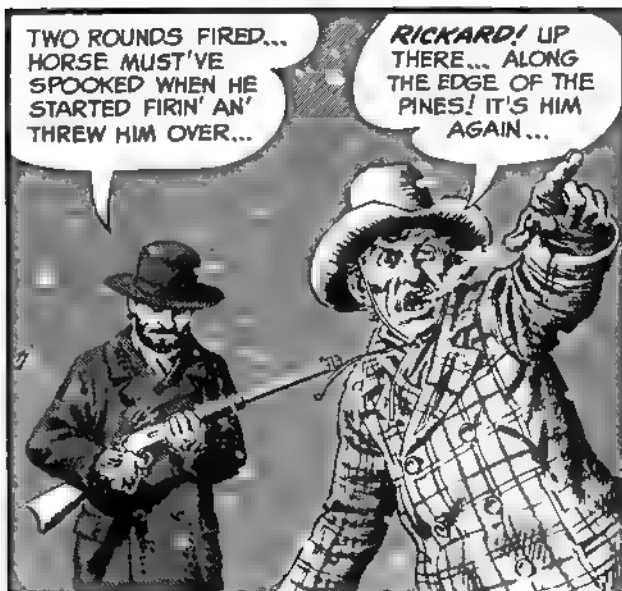
THE DAY HAD BEEN  
BURN DARK AND  
BLEAK, A CONSTANT  
TWILIGHT... NOW  
THE MOUNTAIN WIND  
ROSE, WHISTLING  
AND BITING AT  
THE BACKS OF  
THE THREE HORSE-  
MEN CARRYING  
WITH IT THE FIRST  
FLAKES OF FALLING  
SNOW TO HAMPER  
AND OBSCURE  
VISION



THERE'S UP ON  
THE MOUNTAIN  
A RIDER



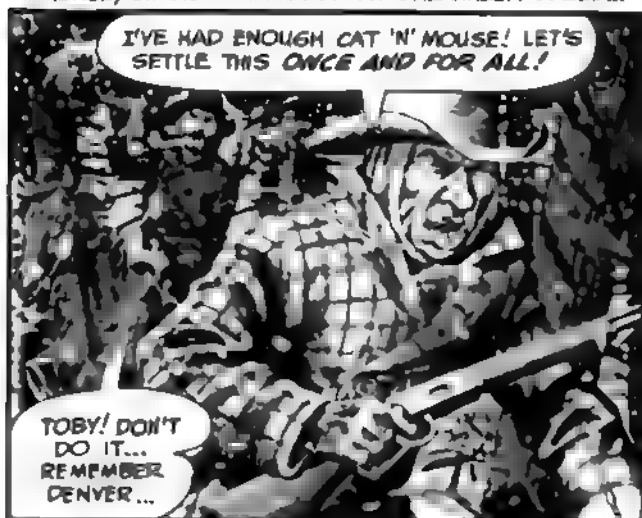




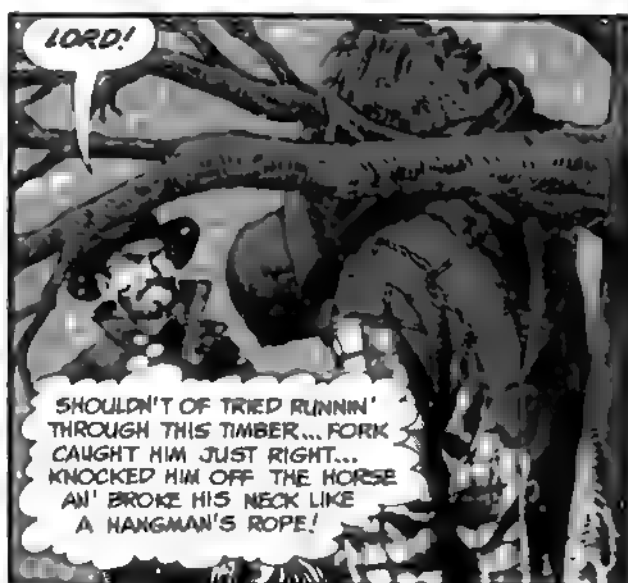
BOTH MEN PUSHED THEIR MOUNTS HARD OVER THE WINDING, SLIPPERY TREACHERY OF THE NARROW MOUNTAIN TRAIL, UP AND DOWN THROUGH HIGH DANGEROUS STRETCHES AND LOW SHELTERED AREAS...



WITH A CRY, TOBY SUDDENLY PUT THE SPURS TO HIS HORSE, CHARGING FORWARD AT BREAKNECK SPEED...



TOBY WAS OUT OF SIGHT BEFORE RICKARD COULD FINISH SHOUTING. IT WAS ALL HE COULD DO TO FOLLOW THE CRASHING SOUND OF TOBY'S HORSE AS IT RACED THROUGH THE TIMBER, UNTIL...





SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE, RICKARD THOUGHT HE HEARD THE SNORT OF A HORSE, AND...



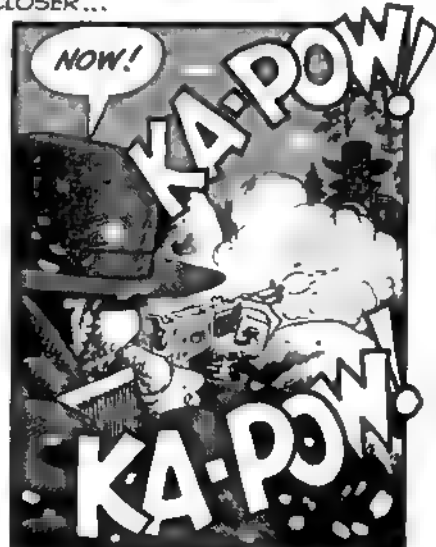
RICKARD PLUNGED OUT OF THE TIMBERLAND, BACK TO THE ICY DESOLATION OF THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL, DETERMINED TO LEAVE BEHIND THE PERSISTENT RIDER IN BLACK... ONLY TO BE TORTURED EACH STEP OF THE WAY BY THOUGHTS OF HIS DOGGED PURSUER...



DISMOUNTING, RICKARD SENT HIS HORSE ON ALONG THE TRAIL WITH A SLAP...



FROM THE DISTANCE CAME THE SLOW ECHOING CLATTER OF A LONE HORSE'S HOOVES... WOOD AND METAL OF THE RIFLE WERE LIKE ICE, BUT RICKARD'S PALMS WERE MOIST WITH SWEAT... THE INSIDE OF HIS MOUTH WAS LIKE COTTON AS HE LINED UP THE TARGET COMING CLOSER AND CLOSER...



THE SOUND OF THE RIFLE FIRE REBOUNDED OFF THE SURROUNDING CLIFFS GROWING TO A ROAR OF CANNONS AND ANSWERED BY ANOTHER ROAR EVEN MORE TERRIBLE...

OH, NO... NO... **GOO**  
NO! THE NOISE FROM  
THE RIFLE... IT'S  
CAUSING A... A...

**BRRRRR-  
BRRRROOM!**



... **AVALANCHE**  
-EEEEEEEEE!

IN TIME, THE SOUND FADED. RICKARD LAY WITH THE WEIGHT OF A MOUNTAIN ON HIM... BREATH, LIKE LIFE, SQUEEZING OUT OF HIS NUMB BODY... THROUGH BLURRED, TORTURED EYES, HE SENSED A DARK FIGURE DISMOUNTING, MOVING NEARER...

AFTER... ALL... THIS...  
I STILL... DIDN'T...  
GET...

YOU COULD NEVER GET  
ME, RICKARD!

WHY...? WHO ARE...  
YOU...? TELL ME...  
PLEASE... I'M...  
I'M DYING...

OF COURSE, RICKARD,  
IT'S THE ONLY WAY  
YOU COULD FIND OUT...



...FOR I AM... **DEATH!**

LOOKS LIKE RICKARD  
FOUND A HOME ON THE  
RANGE... **PERMANENTLY!**  
JUST AS WELL, RIDING  
AROUND IN ALL THAT  
SNOW MIGHT HAVE  
BEEN THE DEATH OF  
THEM ANYWAY!  
HEE HEE!

YOU ARE BOTH FAMILIAR


SET 'ER DOWN GENTLY, MR. CASSIDY! I DON'T INTEND TO SPEND MY REMAINING DAYS ON A PLANET WHOSE INHABITANTS HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR SEVERAL THOUSAND YEARS!

BYE BYE, CASSIDY!



REMAINS OF A MEMBER OF THE INTELLIGENT LIFE SPECIES OF THIS PLANET.... AND RECONSTRUCT

ONCE RECONSTRUCTED, WE MAY HAVE  
A POSSIBLE CLUE TO WHY THIS LIFE-  
FORM **DESTROYED** ITSELF  
AS IT UNDOUBTEDLY  
**MUST HAVE**



THE  
MAYBE  
EITHER  
RACE CAN  
LEARN A  
VALUABLE  
LESSON  
FROM IT

ART &amp; STORY BY DUDE



HERE CAPT!  
I THINK I'VE  
FOUND  
SOMETHING!

IT LOOKS LIKE PART OF A  
**SKELETON...** PROTRUDING  
FROM THE GROUND!!  
HALF BURIED  
UNDER THIS  
RUBBLE

A SHOVEL.  
Q: MR  
CADDY!!

LOOK! IT'S PARTIALLY  
COVERED BY THE  
REMAINS OF SOME  
SORT OF DWELLING!  
THIS IS INDEED THE  
INTELLIGENT LIFE-FORM!  
ONLY A **REASONING**  
CREATURE IS CAPABLE  
OF BUILDING A SHELTER  
FROM THE ELEMENTS..

CAPTAIN,  
LOOK!  
AN EYE!!  
IT'S STILL  
INTACT...  
AFTER  
CENTURIES!

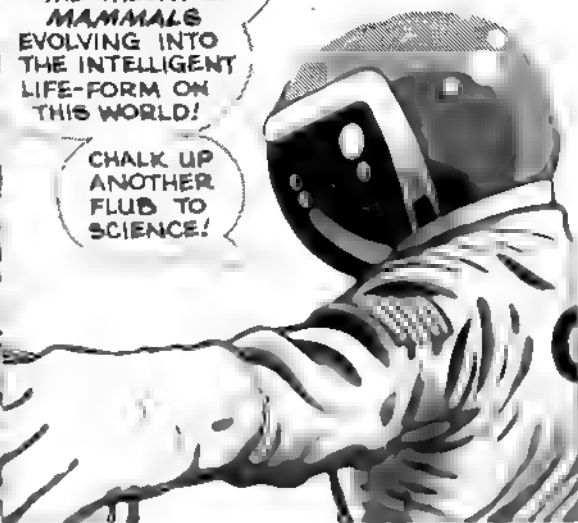
BUT WHAT FORM OF  
LIFE WAS IT? THE  
SKELETON IS A  
VERY ENDURING  
SUBSTANCE... IT LOOKS  
ALMOST **BLACK**,  
COMPARED TO THE OWN  
WHITE BONE STRUCTURE!

REMARKABLE  
PRESERVATION!  
BUT IT  
DOES SEEM  
TO BE THE  
CREATURE'S  
**VISUAL**  
APPEARANCE!  
IT'S ALMOST  
**INSECT-**  
**LIKE** IN  
APPEARANCE!  
SO ROUND!

THIS IS MOST STRANGE! THE SKELETON INDICATES THE CREATURE WAS A **REPTILE**— AND YET ALL FOURS TO GET AROUND ON! YET THIS IT INDICATES IT MAY HAVE BEEN A MONSTROUS **INSECT**!!

THAT SURE BLOWS THE THEORY OF **MAMMALS** EVOLVING INTO THE INTELLIGENT LIFE-FORM ON THIS WORLD!

CHALK UP ANOTHER FLUB TO SCIENCE!



CAP'N, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS, BUT I'VE JUST UNEARTHED WHAT APPEARS TO BE THIS CREATURE'S **DIGESTIVE TRACT AND INTESTINES!** T... THEY SEEM TO BE **PETRIFIED**!!

**PETRIFIED?** WHY THAT'S IT!! THAT'S WHY THE EYE IS INTACT...AND THE SKELETON IS OF SUCH A HARD SUBSTANCE!!

IF IT'S TRULY PETRIFIED WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO UNCOVER EVERY PART OF ITS ANATOMY!

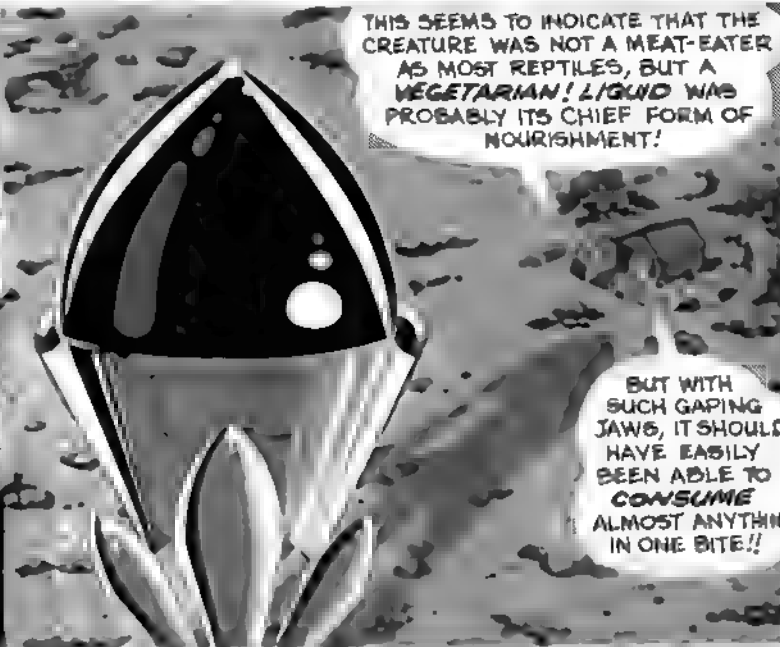


THE JAWS, SIR! AND THAT THE COMPLETELY **INTACT!**

B BUT THERE'S NO **TEETH**!!

THIS SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE CREATURE WAS NOT A MEAT-EATER AS MOST REPTILES, BUT A **VEGETARIAN!** LIQUID WAS PROBABLY ITS CHIEF FORM OF NOURISHMENT!

BUT WITH SUCH GAPING JAWS, IT SHOULD HAVE EASILY BEEN ABLE TO **CONSUME** ALMOST ANYTHING IN ONE BITE!!

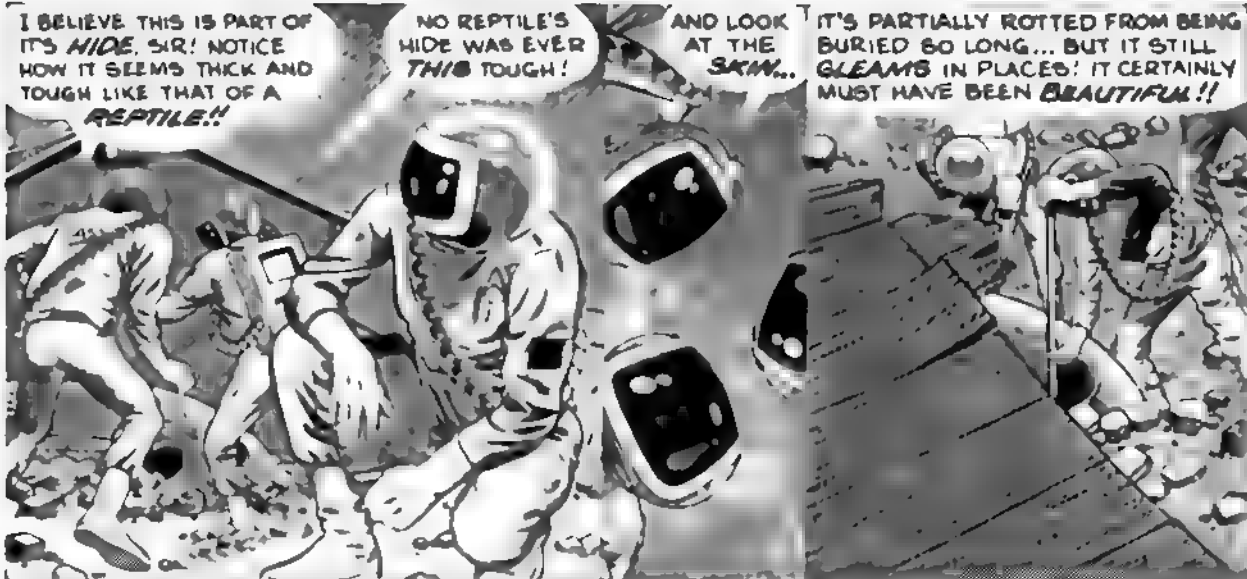


I BELIEVE THIS IS PART OF ITS **HIDE**. SIR! NOTICE HOW IT SEEMS THICK AND TOUGH LIKE THAT OF A **REPTILE!!**

NO REPTILE'S HIDE WAS EVER **THIS TOUGH!**

AND LOOK AT THE **SKIN...**

IT'S PARTIALLY ROTTED FROM BEING BURIED SO LONG... BUT IT STILL **GLEAMS** IN PLACES! IT CERTAINLY MUST HAVE BEEN **BEAUTIFUL!!**



**BEAUTIFUL AND STRANGE!** IN OUR TRAVELS AROUND THE UNIVERSE, NEVER HAVE WE ENCOUNTERED A LIVING CREATURE SUCH AS **THIS!!**

WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S RACE **DIED OUT**, SIR?

JUST SPECULATION, BUT I'D SAY **OVER-POPULATION** WAS THE MAIN REASON! TOO MANY OF THE LITTLE BRUTES VERY PROBABLY CONGESTED TOO SMALL OF A SPACE TO EXIST HARMONIOUSLY!!

UNDOUBTEDLY, THEY POLLUTED THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND CONSUMED THE GREATER PORTION OF THEIR **EDIBLE RESERVES!!**



THEN THEY DIED A SLOW AND TORMENTED DEATH!!

**SUICIDE OF A RACE!!**

DO YOU THINK THERE'S ANOTHER SPECIES LIKE THEM ANYWHERE IN THE UNIVERSE, CAPTAIN?

I DOUBT IT, CASHOY!

IT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF A KIND!



HEW! HEW! HOPE THIS STORY DOESN'T **BUR** YOU AS MUCH AS IT **TIRES** ME! BUT IT'S SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT! DON'T **BEETLE** YOUR HEAD INTO A WALL WORRYING ABOUT IT, SPACE-SPOOK SPOOF BUFFS!

STORY  
ART  
duboy







TO KICK OFF THIS GHOSTLY-GASSER FROM MY GORY GAZETTE, LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO **ROGER CULP**, A LITERARY AGENT WHO IN HIS OWN WORDS WILL TELL YOU OF THE **EERIE EVENTS AND HORRIBLE HAPPENINGS** TAKING PLACE IN AND AROUND...

THE

# LIGHTHOUSE!

"THE ROCKBOUND COAST OF MAINE IS A LONG WAY FROM MANHATTAN'S COCKTAIL PARTIES AND LITERARY TEAS, BUT WHEN MY TOP WRITER WAS LATE TO THE PUBLISHER WITH A BOOK FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CAREER, I DECIDED TO MAKE THE TRIP...IF ONLY I HAD KNOWN!"

BLASTED  
PEA-SOUP! DRIVING'S  
IMPOSSIBLE! MAYBE  
I CAN FIND THE  
LIGHTHOUSE ON  
FOOT...CAN'T  
BE FAR...



"WHY ERIC STANDISH WOULD GIVE UP A PENTHOUSE TO WRITE IN AN ABANDONED LIGHTHOUSE WAS BEYOND ME, ALTHOUGH EACH STEP I TOOK THROUGH THAT FOG ENSHROUDED NIGHT BROUGHT ME CLOSER TO AN ANSWER..."

LISTEN TO THAT SURF  
FOUND...ERIC'S PLACE  
MUST BE NEAR BY...  
I CAN--

HELLO!  
WHO'S  
THERE?

MATTHEW  
FRIE! IS IT YOU,  
MATTHEW FRIE?

AL  
WILLIAMSON  
86

"SHE SEEMED TO WANDER OUT OF NOWHERE...UNTOUCHED AND UNAFFECTED BY THE NIGHT'S CHILL AND THE DAMPNES OF THE ENVELOPING MISTS..."

Y-YOU'RE NOT MATTHEW FRYE...

NO... BUT I'M LOOKING FOR SOME-ONE TOO! ERIC STANDISH... SUPPOSED TO LIVE IN THE OLD LIGHT-HOUSE... I CAN'T FIND IT IN THIS FOG!

Y-YES...THE LIGHTHOUSE! COME...THIS WAY...

"THE GIRL MOVED WITH SURENESS THROUGH THE LAYERS OF FOG... AHEAD, THE BOOMING SOUND OF THE ATLANTIC BREAKING ON THE COASTAL ROCKS GREW LOUDER AND NEARER..."

"THE OCEAN'S ROAR BECAME LIKE NEAR-BY THUNDER...THEN WITHOUT WARNING, THE LANTERN LIGHT WAS GONE!"

HEY! WHERE ARE YOU?

THIS WAY... SHE WAS MOVING THIS WAY...

YAAA AAAH!!

"MY HANDS BECAME CLAWS SCRAPING AND CLINGING TO THE WET EARTH AND ROCKS OF THE CLIFF'S EDGE, WHILE MY LEGS THRASHED IN EMPTY AIR, 100 FEET ABOVE THE POUNDING SURF!"



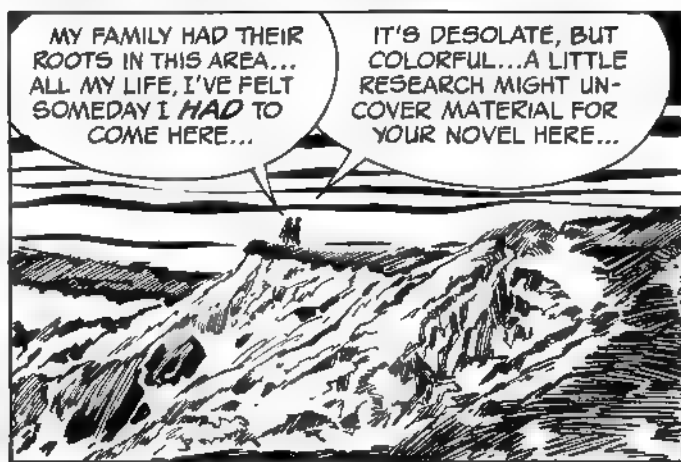
"FOR ETERNAL MOMENTS I DANGLED LIKE DEADWEIGHT, WATCHING IN HORROR AS MY FINGERS GREW STIFF AND NUMB AND SLOWLY BEGAN TO SLIP..."



"GROUND WAS BENEATH MY FEET AND I LOOKED GRATEFULLY INTO A FAMILIAR FACE... A FACE SOMEHOW GROWN QUICKLY OLD AND TIRED..."



"ERIC LISTENED WITH GRIM RESIGNATION AS I TOLD HIM WHAT HAPPENED... LIKE A MAN HEARING FROM HIS DOCTOR THAT HE HAS A FATAL DISEASE!"



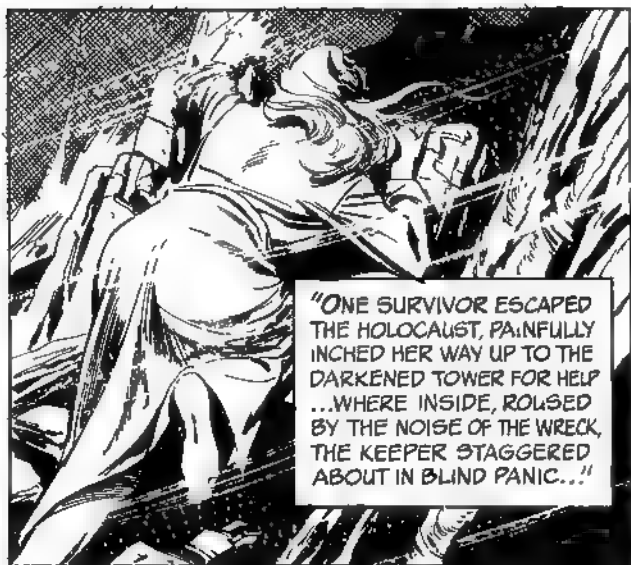
"ERIC HAD DONE THE BEST HE COULD TO MAKE HIS QUARTERS SNUG AND COMFORTABLE... BUT NO AMOUNT OF HOMEY TOUCHES COULD CUT THE PERVAIDING GLOOM THAT HUNG ABOUT THE OLD LIGHTHOUSE."



"EIGHTY YEARS AGO THE SCHOONER **WINDFALL** WAS DASHED TO PIECES ON THE SHOALS OFF THIS POINT... TREACHEROUS SHOALS FOR WHICH THIS TOWER'S BEACON WAS TO GIVE WARNING!"



"BUT THERE WAS NO WARNING LIGHT FOR THE **WINDFALL**... THE KEEPER OF THE LIGHTHOUSE HAD FALLEN ASLEEP IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR, UNMINDFUL OF THE STORM OR HIS DUTIES..."



"ONE SURVIVOR ESCAPED THE HOLOCAUST, PAINFULLY INCHED HER WAY UP TO THE DARKENED TOWER FOR HELP... WHERE INSIDE, ROUSED BY THE NOISE OF THE WRECK, THE KEEPER STAGGERED ABOUT IN BLIND PANIC..."

"CONFRONTED BY THE ONLY WITNESS TO HIS NEGLIGENCE, THE KEEPER OF THE LIGHT COMPOUNDED HIS DEED WITH AN ACT MORE HORRIBLE FOR ITS DELIBERATENESS!"



THAT LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER WAS MY **GRANDFATHER**... **MATTHEW FRYE!**

B-BUT... THE GIRL I SAW TONIGHT... SHE WAS LOOKING FOR... YOUR **GRANDFATHER?**





"DRIVING RAIN BEGAN A TATTOO ON THE WINDOWS... A STORM WAS MOVING IN FROM THE SEA..."

ERIC STANDISH IS A FINE NAME... I'VE MADE QUITE A CAREER WRITING UNDER IT, BUT YOU NEVER ESCAPE THE NAME YOU'RE BORN WITH... YOU SEE, ROGER, I TOO AM **MATTHEW FRYE!**



# CLANG!

THAT NOISE!

T-THE WIND...



"EVEN AS I SAID IT, I KNEW THE WIND HADN'T MADE THE NOISE, JUST AS WE BOTH KNEW, WHILE RUSHING TO THE STAIRS, WHAT WE'D SEE BELOW..."

**MATTHEW FRYE!** IS IT YOU, **MATTHEW FRYE?**



I'VE COME FOR YOU, **MATTHEW FRYE!**

OH, GOD!



"WAS IT FEAR THAT HELD ME IN PARALYZED HORROR OR *SOMETHING MORE?* ERIC STARED TRANSFIXED, YET HIS FEET MOVED, CARRYING HIM BACKWARD... ACROSS THE ROOM, OUT INTO THE WIND AND RAIN, ONTO THE OLD TOWER'S BALCONY

NOW, **MATTHEW FRYE... NOW!**



**ERIC!**

# EEEEEE YAH HHHH!



"ERIC'S FEARFUL SCREAM DROWNED IN THE RAGING WIND, AND THE TWO FIGURES DISAPPEARED INSTANTLY IN THE BOILING SURF BELOW..."

"I ALMOST FELL DOWN THE SPIRAL STAIRS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE AND OUT INTO THE LASHING STORM...YET ALL I COULD FIND BELOW WERE COASTAL ROCKS LIKE GIANT GRAVE-STONES AND THE OCEAN'S COLD CRASHING WAVES..."

"NUMB WITH EXHAUSTION AND COLD, I SOMEHOW MADE MY WAY BACK TO THE LIGHTHOUSE...MY LAST MEMORY OF THAT NIGHT IS CLAWING OPEN THE HEAVY IRON DOOR..."

"THE NEXT MORNING I WAS AWAKENED BY THE SCREECHING OF GULLS AND CRIES OF LOCAL FISHERMEN..."

LORDY!

I-IT AIN'T POSSIBLE!


"THE SEA HAD DISGORGED ITS VICTIMS OF THE NIGHT BEFORE AND THE SIGHT IS ETCHED FOREVER IN MY MIND...THE HORROR ON ERIC'S DEAD FACE WAS NOT OF DYING, BUT OF THE THING THAT CLUNG TO HIM...THE CORPSE OF A ONCE-BEAUTIFUL GIRL..."

**DEAD NOW FOR EIGHTY YEARS!"**

THERE'S ONE WRITER WHO REALLY GOT **INVOLVED** IN HIS WORK...PERSONALLY, I THINK HE WAS **ALL WET**, OR AT LEAST **WASHED UP!** NOW, GRAB A **WEIRD WAVE** AND SEE WHERE MY **TERROR TIDE** CARRIES YOU NEXT!

THE DARK AGES! FEAR AND SUPERSTITION ABOUND, AND A MAN TRAVELING ALONE CAN NEVER BE SURE... THE NEXT CASTLE IN THE TWILIGHT, IS IT THAT OF A FRIEND? AN ENEMY? OR, IS IT EVEN THE...

# OGRE'S CASTLE



TURN BACK! THE  
CASTLE IS CURSED!  
NOTHING THERE BUT  
MONSTERS! SORCERY!  
DESTRUCTION!

MONTHS AGO MY  
YOUNGER BROTHER  
WENT OFF ON A QUEST  
TOWARD THIS CASTLE!  
NOW I SEEK HIM OUT!

ASIDE, OLD MAN! WARNINGS  
AND WIVES TALES WON'T  
MAKE ME PUT OFF LEARNING  
MY BROTHER'S FATE!

BEWARE THAT  
HIS FATE DOES  
NOT BECOME  
YOURS!



ANOTHER WARNING...



... FOR MEN WITH  
WEAK ARMS AND  
DULL SWORDS!

FROM THIS TREE I'LL  
HAVE A VIEW OF THE  
CASTLE AND WHAT FOES  
MAY WAIT FOR ME  
THERE.



SLIMY WALLS AND ROTTING  
TIMBERS! NO WONDER THE  
OLD MAN THOUGHT EVIL LURKS  
THERE. NO BETTER SPOT...  
WAIT! SOMEONE'S COMING  
OUT!



A GIRL! IN THE HANDS OF THOSE  
MONSTERS! WITH THEIR LIKE IT  
MAY BE TOO LATE TO RESCUE  
MY BROTHER, BUT I CAN SAVE  
HER AND AVENGE HIS NAME!







A GOOD FIGHT, BUT NOT YET OVER, SIR KNIGHT! I'VE OTHER SURPRISES. AT HIM, MY PETS!



BATS! HUNDREDS OF THEM!



BUT THEY CAN'T TAKE THE FLAME!

I'M LEFT WITH ONLY MY DAGGER FOR A WEAPON, BUT THE GIRL MUST BE AT THE TOP OF THESE STAIRS!



DIE! DEMON HOUND!



DON'T WORRY, MY LADY! ONLY THE TOAD-GUARDIAN OF THIS PLACE OF EVIL IS LEFT AND HE LACKS THE COURAGE TO STOP OUR ESCAPE!



WELL DONE, SIR KNIGHT, BUT YOU CAN'T WIN A RACE ACROSS THIS COURTYARD WITH AN ARROW FROM MY CROSSBOW!

NO--



--BUT MY DAGGER CAN!

ARGHH!

WHAT MAGIC IS THIS?  
THE OGRE CHANGES  
BEFORE YOUR EYES!

THIS IS NO  
MONSTER!  
**IT IS MY  
BROTHER!**  
WHAT HAVE  
I DONE?!

VERY WELL, SIR  
KNIGHT! HE WAS  
THE BEST GUARD-  
IAN EVER AT THE  
CASTLE TILL HE  
OPPOSED YOU!

AFTER ALL, A  
**SORCERESS** NEEDS  
SOMEONE TO KEEP  
FOOLS AND MEDDLERS  
FROM INTERRUPTING  
HER WORK! A TASK  
YOU'LL BE VERY  
GOOD AT--

--UNTIL A BETTER  
KNIGHT COMES  
ALONG!

HEH, HEH, HEH, HOW DID YOU  
LIKE THAT, FELLO FIENDS?  
WELL THE SUN IS COMING  
UP AND I MUST RETURN  
TO MY COFFIN, BUT DON'T  
FRET! I'LL BE SEEING YOU  
SOON.





YOU **RABID READERS** LOOK A LITTLE PALE AFTER THAT LAST **PULSE-POUNDER**... BETTER REST UP! LET **COUSIN EERIE** ARRANGE SOME **LOATHESOME LODGINGS** FOR THE NIGHT... RIGHT UP THE DARK, CREAKING STAIRS YOU'LL FIND A...

# ROOM WITH A VIEW!

IT WAS LIKE A HUNDRED AND ONE OTHER SMALL-TOWN HOTELS DEXTER HAD STAYED IN... BAD LIGHTING, SEEDY FURNISHINGS... ORDINARY AND DULL...

I NEED A ROOM FOR THE NIGHT...



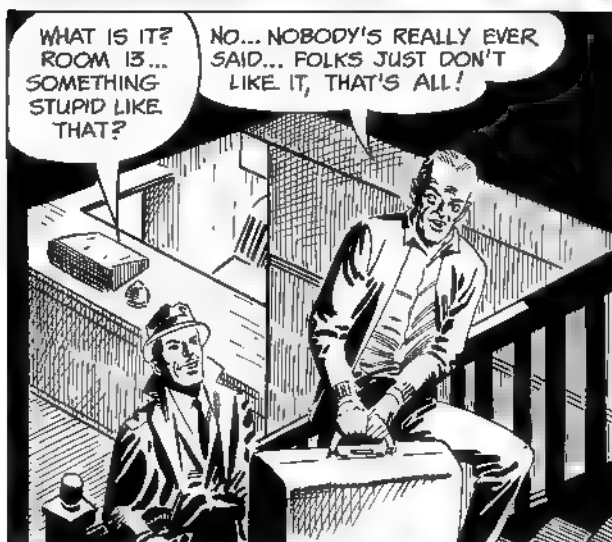
SORRY, MISTER! WE'RE FULL UP!

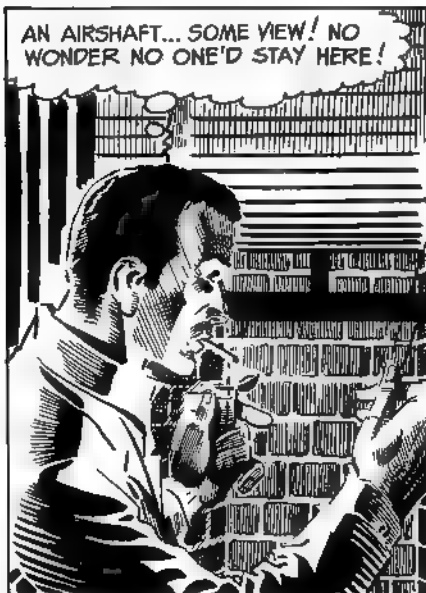


DON'T GIVE ME THAT! LOOK AT YOUR BOARD... THERE'S ONE ROOM LEFT!

N-NO... WE NEVER RENT THAT ONE! I'VE BEEN GIVEN ORDERS...







YET EACH TIME DEXTER CLOSED HIS EYES, HE COULD STILL SEE THE EVIL FACE AND CHILLING STARE OF THE MIRROR REFLECTION...



IT LOOKED SO REAL... BUT THERE WAS NOTHING BEHIND ME... **BLAST IT!** CAN'T SLEEP FOR THINKING ABOUT IT... AWW, WHAT'S THE USE...



... I'LL TAKE ANOTHER LOOK!



N-NOT HERE... N-NOTHING JUST LIKE BEFORE!



**NOT ANOTHER MINUTE** ... I'M NOT STAYING HERE!



FRONT DESK, ANYTHING WRONG, MR. DEXTER? GOTTA GET HOLD OF MYSELF... I'LL SOUND LIKE A FOOL... CLERK'S CRAZY HINTS MADE MY IMAGINATION RUN WILD... THAT'S ALL... HAS TO BE...



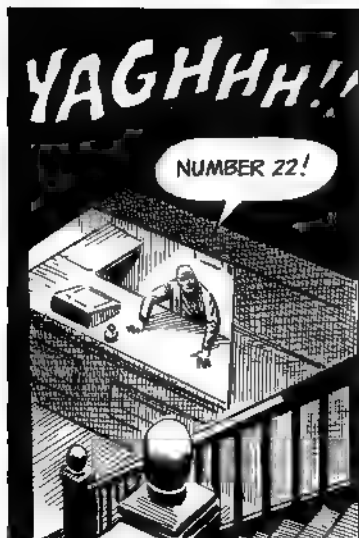
N-NO... JUST WANTED TO LEAVE A CALL FOR ME AT EIGHT...



THE NIGHT CREPT ON BUT NO SLEEP CAME TO DEXTER... ONLY AGONIZING, TORTURED THOUGHTS...

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE LEFT... *HAS* TO BE MY IMAGINATION... MIND PLAYING TRICKS... THOSE *T-THINGS*... SO REAL! TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE... WHAT IF THEY'RE IN THERE NOW... WATCHING... CAN'T BE... SILLY... WON'T...





THE CLERK GASPED IN HORROR... THE ROOM HE STOOD IN MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABANDONED BY DEXTER, BUT THE ROOM IN THE MIRROR'S REFLECTION WAS... **FULLY OCCUPIED!**



DEXTER PICKED A HARD WAY TO SKIP OUT ON THE HOTEL BILL, BUT AT LEAST HE FINALLY GOT TO SLEEP... **PERMANENTLY!** YOU MAY HAVE TROUBLE SLEEPING TOO, WHEN YOU READ MY NEXT LITTLE **SCREAM STORY!**





LOOKING A LITTLE PALE FROM MY LAST BIT OF NAUSEOUS NONSENSE, EH? WHAT YOU NEED IS A CHANGE OF CLIMATE, SO I'LL GIVE YOU A BIT OF TERROR IN THE TROPICS! RELAX... THAT STEADY THROB YOU HEAR ISN'T YOUR POUNDING HEART, IT'S THE CHILLING BEAT OF THE...

# VOODOO DRUM!



NOW, OF COURSE, WHEN ONE THINKS OF JAMAICA, IT IS TO ENVISION WHITE, SANDY BEACHES, SPARKLING BLUE OCEAN, A HAPPY CALYPSO RHYTHM...RIGHTLY SO, I HOPE. YET IT IS FOREIGN TO MY OWN EXPERIENCES SOME YEARS AGO. MY JAMAICA WAS ONE OF INLAND PLANTATIONS IN THE SHADOW OF THE STILL UNEXPLORED COCKPIT COUNTRY, WHERE **OBEAHISM**, THE LOCAL FORM OF VODOO, WAS NEITHER JOKE NOR VAGUE RUMOR, AND NIGHTFALL SOMETIMES WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A STEADY DRUMBEAT AS BEHIND LOCKED DOORS, FRIGHTENED VOICES WHISPERED "**ZOMBIE!**"



BUT MOSTLY, TO THINK OF JAMAICA, IS FOR ME TO REMEMBER CLEGG GILMAN, AND THE UNPLEASANTNESS INVOLVING HIM...

FOR GOD'S SAKE, GILMAN, COME AWAY FROM THE WINDOW! YOU CAME OVER BECAUSE YOU WANTED COMPANY ...YOU'VE HARDLY SAID THREE WORDS SINCE YOU ARRIVED!

IT'S THE BLASTED HEAT! AND THOSE DRUMS...THOSE @#!\$#! DRUMS!!

GILMAN WAS NOT A LIKEABLE MAN, CRUDE AND ILL-TEMPERED, BUT HE WAS MY NEIGHBOR, AND, IN THE ISOLATION OF PLANTATION LIFE, TO BE TOLERATED...

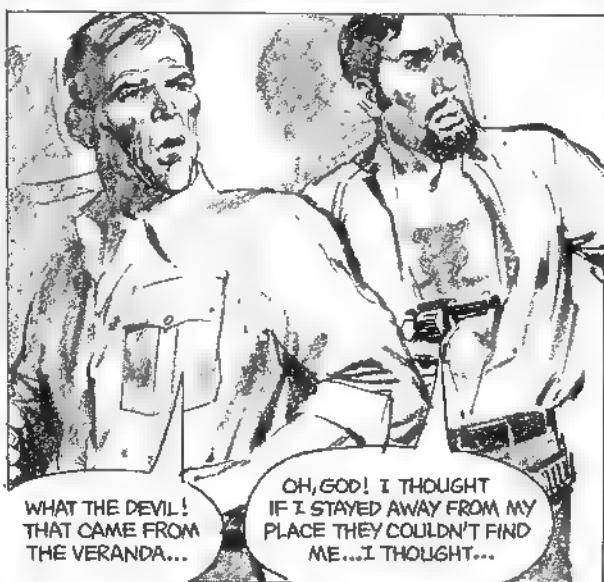
FROM THE MAROON VILLAGE UP IN THE HILLS...NOTHING WE HAVEN'T HEARD BEFORE. WHY LET IT PUT YOU ON EDGE?

WHAT THE @#!\$#! DO YOU KNOW, WYLER?! YOU HAVEN'T SEEN WHAT I'VE SEEN! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THOSE NATIVES ARE CAPABLE OF LIKE I DO!

BOOMbumbaBOOMbumbaBOOMbumbaBOOMbumbaBOOMbumbaBOOMbumba

I KNOW THE MAROONS ARE FINE IF LEFT ALONE! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, GILMAN? WHAT HAVEN'T YOU TOLD ME?

SHUT UP! LISTEN! THE DRUMS HAVE STOPPED...



WHAT THE DEVIL! THAT CAME FROM THE VERANDA...

OH, GOD! I THOUGHT IF I STAYED AWAY FROM MY PLACE THEY COULDN'T FIND ME...I THOUGHT...

GILMAN MUTTERED MORE TO HIMSELF THAN TO ME. UNTHINKINGLY, I ADVANCED TOWARD THE SOUND. PERHAPS OUT OF FEAR OF BEING ALONE, GILMAN MOVED AT MY SIDE, STILL MUMBING TO HIMSELF...

A WRAITH OF FETID AIR SEEMED TO HANG OVER THE SILENT FIGURES AS THEY SHUFFLED FORWARD, COLD AND EMOTIONLESS, YET, SOMEHOW, GRIMLY DETERMINED...



GOOD LORD!



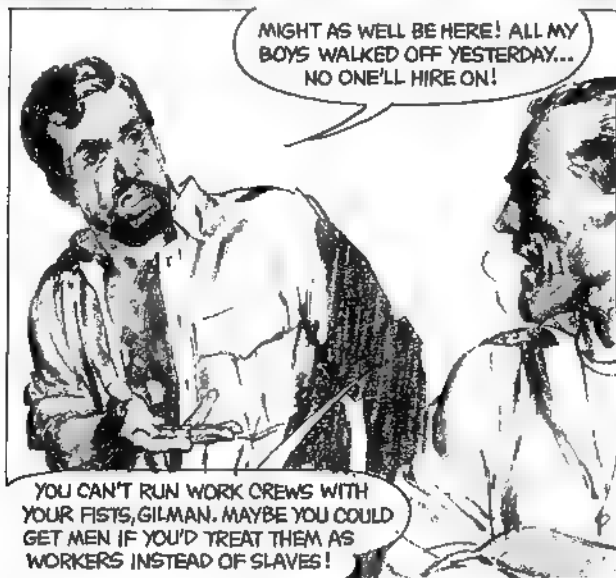




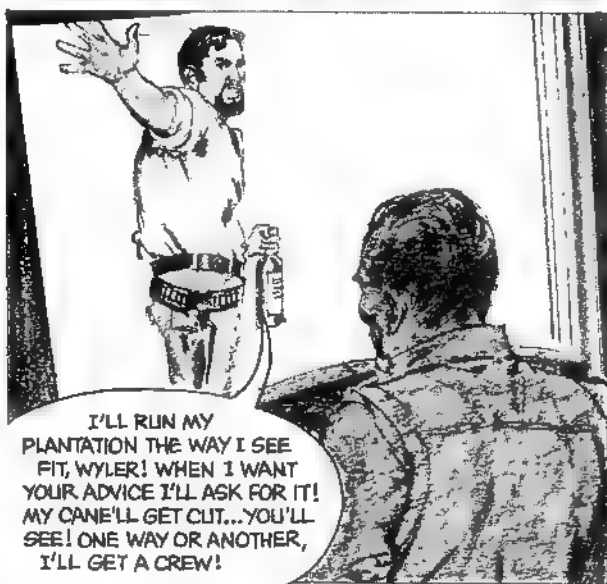
MY FINGERS, DAMP AND SLIPPERY WITH THE COLD SWEAT OF FEAR, FUMBLING AND STRAINED TO GRASP THE STOCK OF MY HUNTING RIFLE WHEN SOMETHING SLAMMED INTO THE BACK OF MY HEAD AND OBLIVION SHIPPED OVER MY BODY LIKE A VAST DARK COLOR...

LATER, AT THE END OF THE WHOLE ORDEAL, I WAS ABLE TO PIECE TOGETHER THE ENTIRE STORY WHICH BEGAN, AS IT WAS TO END, WITH CLEGG GILMAN.

...THIS ONE I GOT IN MANILA. BUT THE ONE ON MY CHEST, THAT'S THE BEST...GOT IT IN SHANGHAI! TOOK THREE HOURS UNDER THE NEEDLE... LOTTA GUYS WOULD'VE FAINTED BUT I...



YOU CAN'T RUN WORK CREWS WITH YOUR FISTS, GILMAN. MAYBE YOU COULD GET MEN IF YOU'D TREAT THEM AS WORKERS INSTEAD OF SLAVES!



I'LL RUN MY PLANTATION THE WAY I SEE FIT, WYLER! WHEN I WANT YOUR ADVICE I'LL ASK FOR IT! MY CANE'LL GET CUT...YOU'LL SEE! ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I'LL GET A CREW!

THE WORD WAS OUT ON GILMAN. NO ONE WOULD HIRE ON WITH HIM. DESPERATION DROVE HIM INTO THE HILLS, TO THE MAROONS AND AN OLD OBEAHMAN CALLED THE DOCTOR...



WHAT YOU ASK AIN'T SO EASY, BUT COME TOMORROW, OL' DOCTOR. BRING YOUR MEN...

I'M PAYIN' TOP PRICES LIKE I PROMISED! YOU'RE THE VODOO MAN, ANYBODY GIVES YOU TROUBLE, SCARE 'EM INTO COMING!

MAROONS ARE PROUD AND INDEPENDENT, WITH LITTLE TO DO WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. STILL, THE DOCTOR'S WILLINGNESS TO AID GILMAN AROUSED NO SUSPICIONS IN THE ANXIOUS PLANTER...



ONE THING, BOSS... THESE BOYS I'M BRINGIN', THEY ONLY WORK AT NIGHT...

I DON'T CARE...DO WHATEVER HAS TO BE DONE! JUST SO MY CANE GETS CUT!

BUT BY DUSK THE NEXT EVENING, AN UNEASINESS GRIPPED GILMAN. HE BECAME UNSURE, ANNOYED...



ALMOST DARK...WHERE IS THAT #@@#! AND HIS MEN? NOTHING COMING OUT OF THOSE HILLS BUT THAT MISERABLE DRUMMING!

SENILE OLD FAKE! WHY'D I EVER TRUST HIM? WONDER IF IT'S HIM POUNDING THAT #@@#! GO DRUM!

BOOM-bumba BOOM-bumba BOOM



STOPPED! ALL OF A SUDDEN IT'S STOPPED...

THE SILENCE LEFT BY THE CESSATION OF THE DRUMS BECAME A GREAT VACUUM TO GILMAN'S STILL RINGING EARS, YAWNING LIKE A GREAT CHASM, PULLING HIM NEARER AND NEARER ITS EDGE. THEN, OUTSIDE, THERE WAS THE LIGHT SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL. GILMAN RUSHED TO THE PORCH...



EVENING, BOSS! THESE BOYS ARE READY FOR WORK...

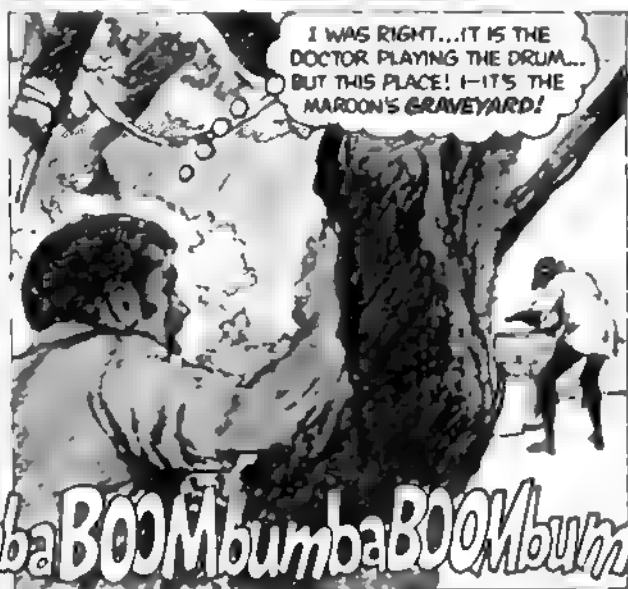
GILMAN COULD NOT SPEAK, HIS THROAT WAS TIGHT AND PARCHED. HE COULD ONLY WATCH AS THE STRANGE GATHERING BEGAN TO WORK WITHOUT A SOUND, NEITHER SPEECH NOR MOVEMENT BREAKING THE TERRIBLE, UNNATURAL SILENCE OVER THE MOONLIT CANE BRAKE...



THEY WORKED THROUGH THE NIGHT WITHOUT STOPPING OR RESTING UNTIL THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN TURNED THE TROPICAL NIGHT INTO A SOFT GRAY FILM. THEN THEY GROUPED SILENTLY BEHIND THE OLD MAN AND WERE LED AWAY...



THE NEXT EVENING AS THE SUN WENT DOWN, THE DRUMMING BEGAN AGAIN. THIS TIME GILMAN DID NOT CRINGE AND PACE IN IRRITATION AT THE SOUND. AS THE DRYING BEAT RELENTLESSLY ECHOED DOWN FROM THE HILLS, GILMAN BEGAN TO FOLLOW THE SOUND...



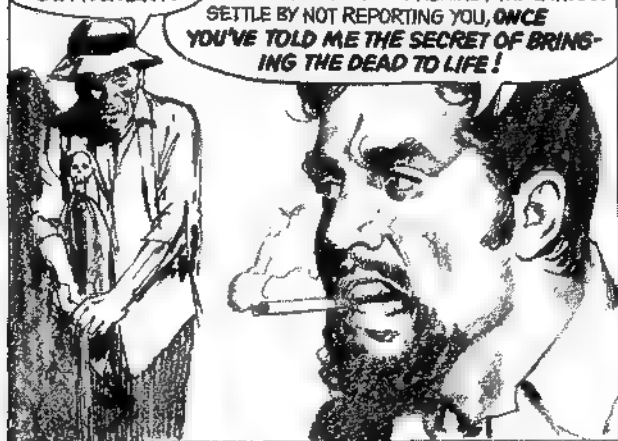
THE DOCTOR'S WRINKLED HANDS MOVED ACROSS THE TAUT SKIN OF THE DRUM IN THE STEADY, HAUNTING RHYTHM, HIS MOUTH MOVING WORDLESSLY AS THOUGH MOUTHING SOME FORBIDDEN OATH TOO EVIL TO BE SPOKEN ALOUD. THEN ANOTHER SOUND MOVED THROUGH THE CLEARING, THE SOUND OF EARTH BEING CLAWED AND THRUST ASIDE...



GILMAN REMAINED SILENT ABOUT WHAT HE'D SEEN AT THE MAROON GRAVEYARD, BROODING, THINKING, AND WAITING...UNTIL THE WORK WAS DONE AND THE CANE HARVESTED...

NOW, BOSS...  
IT'S THE TIME FOR  
SETTLEMENT!

IT'S ALREADY SETTLED DOCTOR!  
THOSE WERE ZOMBIES YOU USED...  
YOU KNOW VODOO'S AGAINST THE LAW. I'LL  
SETTLE BY NOT REPORTING YOU, **ONCE**  
**YOU'VE TOLD ME THE SECRET OF BRING-**  
**ING THE DEAD TO LIFE!**



GILMAN HAD REASONED VERY CAREFULLY. HE IMAGINED A PLANTATION RUN FOREVER WITHOUT LABOR COSTS. USING ZOMBIES HE COULD BECOME RICH, POWERFUL, SUCCESSFUL BEYOND IMAGINING, **ONCE HE KNEW THE SECRET!**

TELL ME, YOU OLD FOOL!  
THERE'S SOME KIND OF CHANT,  
INCANTATION, SPECIAL CEREMONY...  
**TELL ME! TELL BEFORE I**  
**BEAT IT OUT OF YOU!**

**NO! IT IS NOT**  
**FOR YOU TO KNOW! THE**  
**SECRET IS MINE!**

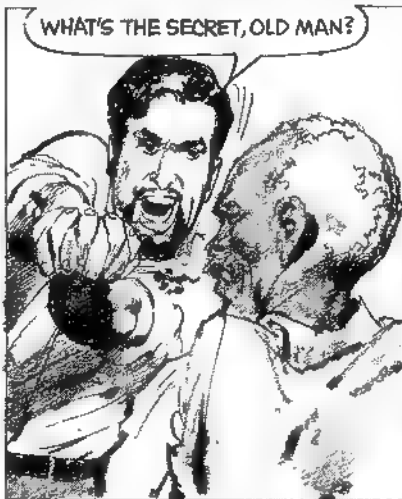


RAGE FLOODED THROUGH GILMAN, TERRIBLE AND UNCONTROLLABLE...ANGER THAT ONLY THIS SPINDLY OLD MAN STOOD BETWEEN HIM AND THE ANSWER. HE STRUCK THE DOCTOR. ONCE. THEN TWICE. THEN AGAIN AND AGAIN. YELLING AND PUMMELING, HIS LEATHER-HARD FISTS SMASHING AND TEARING INTO SOFT MUSCLE AND CARTILAGE...

TELL ME, BLAST YOU! **TELL ME!**



WHAT'S THE SECRET, OLD MAN?

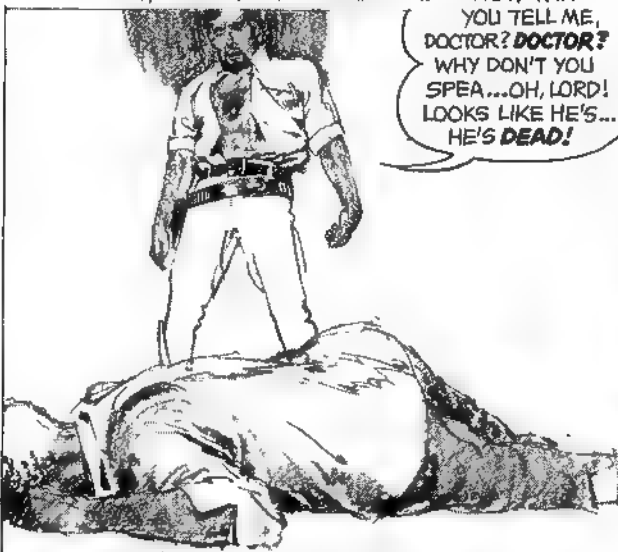


**WHAT...IS...IT?!!**



UNTIL FINALLY, THERE WAS NO RESISTANCE...

**NOW** WILL  
YOU TELL ME,  
DOCTOR? **DOCTOR?**  
WHY DON'T YOU  
SPEAK...OH, LORD!  
LOOKS LIKE HE'S...  
**HE'S DEAD!**



GILMAN BACKED AWAY IN HORROR FROM THE GROTESQUELY SPRAWLED OBEAHMAN, THEN RAN TO THE PLANTATION FOR TOOLS, HIS ONLY THOUGHT BEING TO GET RID OF THE BODY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

**GONE!** MUST STILL HAVE  
HAD SOME LIFE IN HIM...  
**CRAWLED AWAY!**

**B-BUT IF HE MAKES**  
**IT BACK TO THE**  
**MAROONS...THEY'LL**  
**BE AFTER ME...**  
**THEM, OR WORSE!**





SO, CLEGG GILMAN HAD FLED TO MY PLANTATION, BRINGING THE WRATH OF VODOODO INTO MY HOME. BUT AT THE TIME, I KNEW ONLY THAT WE'D BEEN ASSAILED BY THINGS TERRIBLE AND UNNATURAL...

GILMAN? GILMAN!  
GONE...THOSE T-THINGS  
TOOK HIM AWAY...

FAINTLY, FAR IN THE DISTANCE, UP IN THE HILLS, A SOUND DRIFTED DOWN TO ME. THE HORROR INSPIRING CRY OF A PERSON IN MORTAL AGONY! GRABBING THE RIFLE, I PLUNGED OUT OF THE HOUSE INTO THE DARKNESS...

IT'S GILMAN! I SWEAR  
IT'S GILMAN'S VOICE!

I AM NOT AN OVERLY IMAGINATIVE MAN. PERHAPS IT IS JUST AS WELL. IF MY MIND HAD INSPIRED IMAGES TO ACCOMPANY THE SCREAMS FILTERING THROUGH THE NIGHT TO ME, I MIGHT HAVE GONE MAD!

AS LONG AS  
I HEAR THE SOUND  
I KNOW HE'S STILL  
ALIVE...I MAY YET  
REACH HIM IN  
TIME...

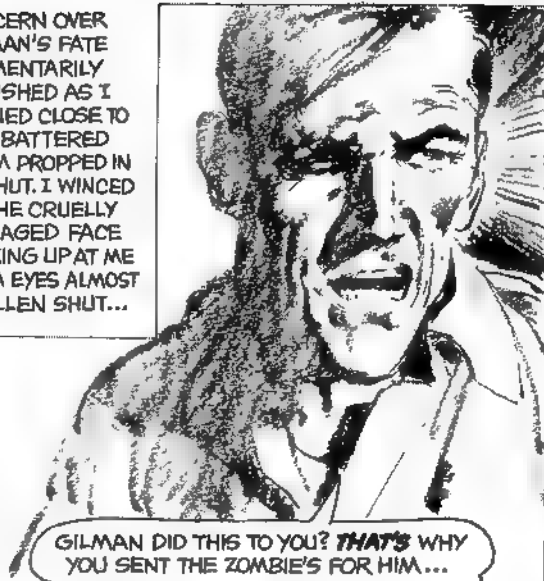
THEY'VE STOPPED!

IT WAS DAYLIGHT BEFORE  
I ENTERED THE VILLAGE.  
IT APPEARED ABANDONED.  
I WENT FROM HUT TO HUT  
UNTIL I WAS SQUINTING  
INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE  
OBEAHMAN'S DWELLING...

G-GILMAN...?

COME IN, BOSS...I HELP  
YOU FIND HIM...AIN'T NOTHING  
TO FEAR...YOU AIN'T HAD...  
NO PART IN THIS...

CONCERN OVER GILMAN'S FATE MOMENTARILY VANISHED AS I LEANED CLOSE TO THE BATTERED FORM PROPPED IN THE HUT. I WINCED AT THE CRUELLY DAMAGED FACE LOOKING UP AT ME FROM EYES ALMOST SWOLLEN SHUT...



GILMAN DID THIS TO YOU? **THAT'S** WHY YOU SENT THE ZOMBIE'S FOR HIM...

THE OLD MAN'S SPEECH WAS A WHISPERING RATTLE. HE HAD NOT LONG TO LIVE...

THEY FETCHED HIM TO ME...SO OL' DOCTOR COULD GIVE HIM WHAT HE WANTED...



H-HE WANTED TO KNOW THE SECRET, BOSS...THE VOODOO SECRET...HOW TO RAISE THE DEAD ZOMBIE...

AIN'T MUCH TO THE SECRET, BOSS... THE DRUM IS THE SECRET...THE VOODOO DRUM HAS THE POWER...THAT'S CAUSE HOW IT'S MADE...IT'S MADE A VERY SPECIAL WAY...



AND OL' MR. GILMAN, BOSS...**HE'S LEARNED ALL ABOUT IT NOW!**

WELL, CAN YOU **BEAT** THAT, FEAR FANS! THOSE ZOMBIES MUST HAVE FRIGHTENED GILMAN OUT OF HIS SKIN! NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT OTHER HORRORS WE CAN **DRUM UP...**



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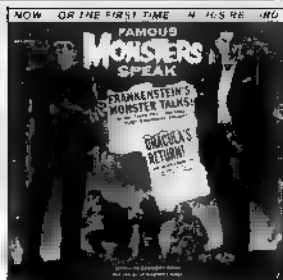
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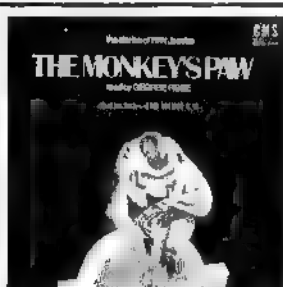
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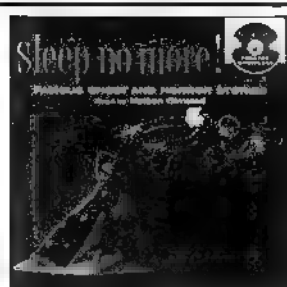
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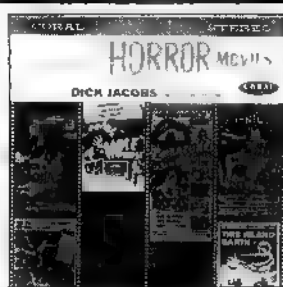
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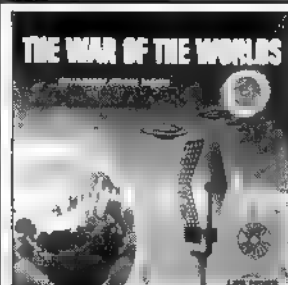
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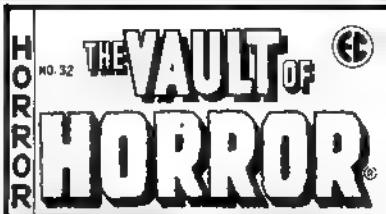
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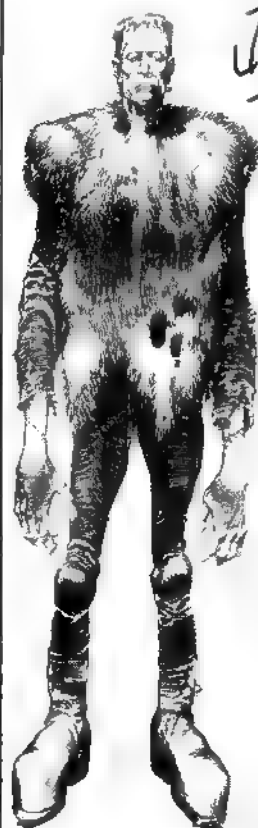
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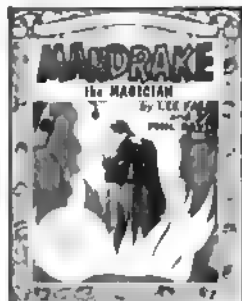
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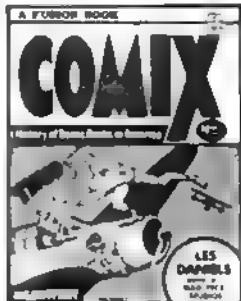
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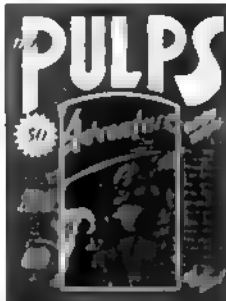
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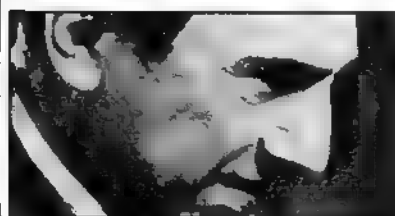
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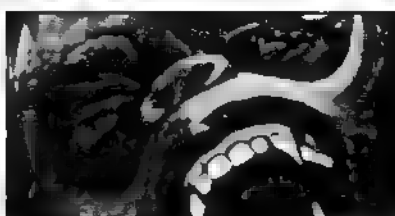
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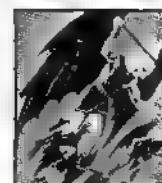
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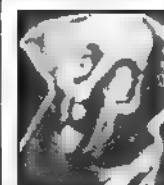
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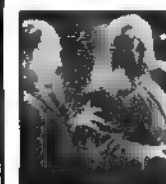
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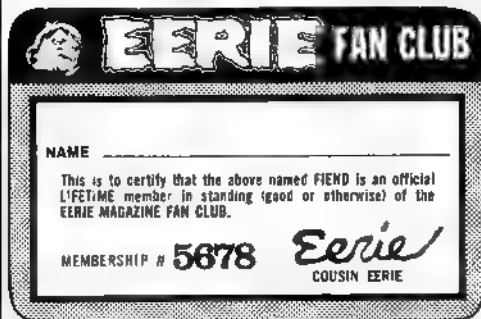
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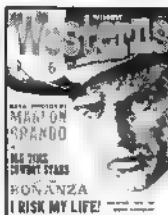
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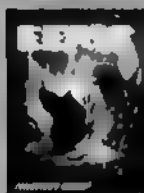
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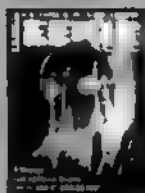
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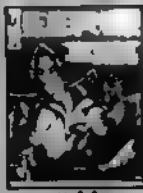
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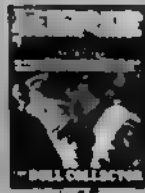
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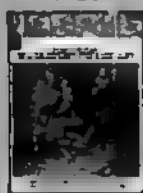
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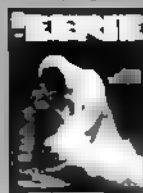
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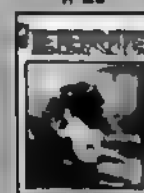
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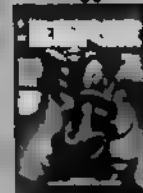
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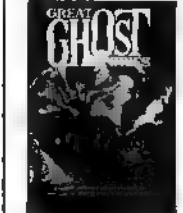
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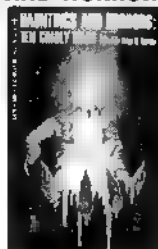
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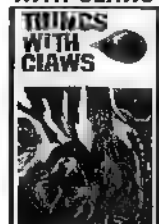
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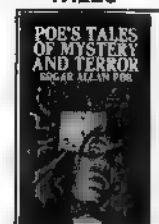
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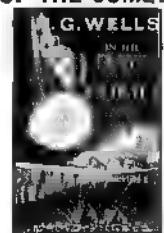
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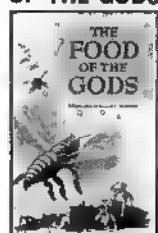
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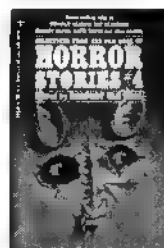
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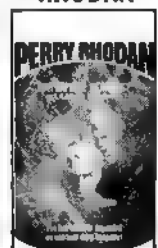
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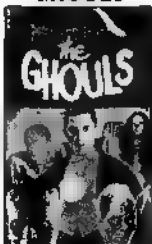
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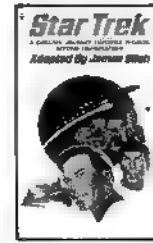
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WELCOME  
FELLOW ASPIRING  
ARCHEOLOGISTS,  
TO ANOTHER  
SHRIEKSCREAMING  
SCARE SCENE OF  
SIZABLE SCOPE!  
JOIN ME IN THE  
BLAZING SUNLIT  
SWELTER OF THE  
SAHARA, SHORTLY  
AFTER WORLD WAR I,  
FOR THIS TERROR  
TIDBIT CALLED...



# I AM DEAD, EGYPT, DEAD



SEEMINGLY ENDLESS MONTHS OF TRIAL-AND-ERROR SEARCH OVER THE SCORCHING SANDS OF THE ENIGMATIC SAHARA DESERT ARE FINALLY RENDERED FRUITFUL. THE DISCOVERY OF A TOMB OF THIS SIZE AND WEALTH IS AN EVENT WHICH RARELY OCCURS DURING THE LIFETIME OF AN ARCHEOLOGIST. YES, JAMES PETERS, RAYMOND WILKINS, AND DIANA TRAVIS HAVE MORE THAN AMPLE CAUSE FOR REJOICING...





IT'LL TAKE AGES JUST TO **CATALOGUE** ALL THESE RELICS! GO TELL THE GUIDES WE WON'T NEED THEM!

RIGHT! OUR TENTS ARE PITCHED AND WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF SUPPLIES TO LAST!

FOR AN ARCHEOLOGIST, **HEAVEN IS THE ADVENT** OF A NEW AND IMPORTANT DISCOVERY...

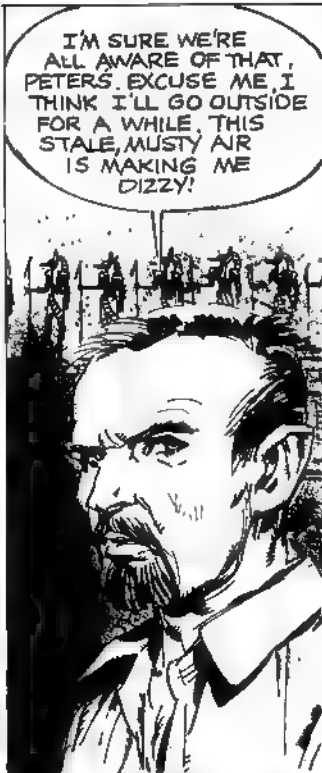
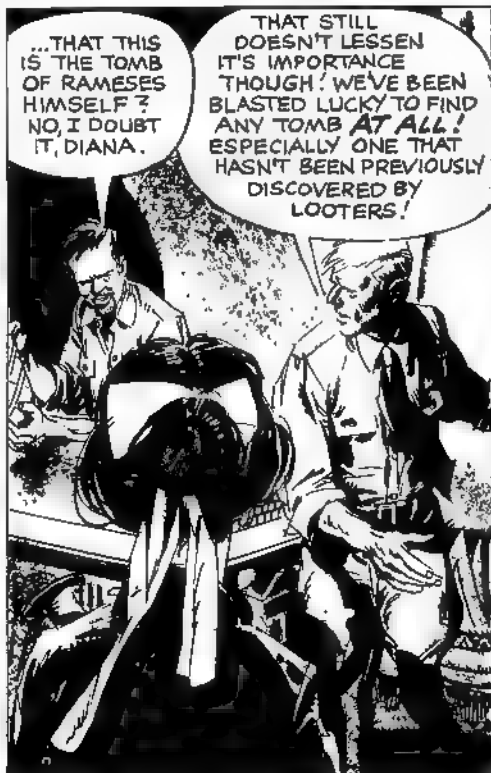
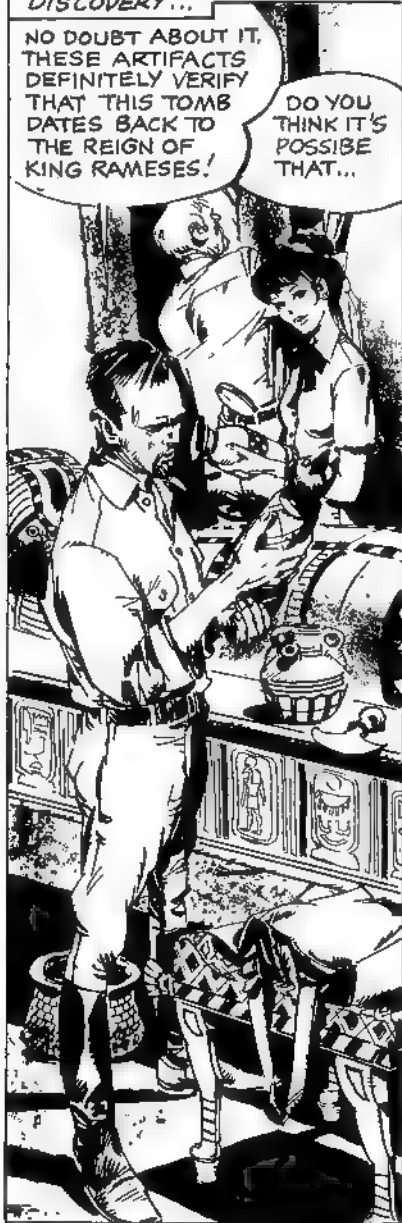
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. THESE ARTIFACTS DEFINITELY VERIFY THAT THIS TOMB DATES BACK TO THE REIGN OF KING RAMESES!

DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE THAT...

...THAT THIS IS THE TOMB OF RAMESES HIMSELF? NO, I DOUBT IT, DIANA.

THAT STILL DOESN'T LESSEN IT'S IMPORTANCE THOUGH! WE'VE BEEN BLASTED LUCKY TO FIND ANY TOMB **AT ALL!** ESPECIALLY ONE THAT HASN'T BEEN PREVIOUSLY DISCOVERED BY LOOTERS!

I'M SURE WE'RE ALL AWARE OF THAT, PETERS. EXCUSE ME, I THINK I'LL GO OUTSIDE FOR A WHILE. THIS STALE, MUSTY AIR IS MAKING ME DIZZY!



IT'S A PITY THE MUSEUM FINANCED THIS EXPEDITION...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, JIM?

GREED TINGES PETER'S  
EXPRESSION AS HE REPLIES  
TO THE GIRL...

I MEAN DIANA,  
THAT IF WE HAD  
FINANCED THIS EXPEDITION  
**OURSELVES**  
WE'D NOW BE RICH  
BEYOND OUR WILDEST  
IMAGININGS!

OF COURSE,  
IF THE MUSEUM  
DIDN'T **HEAR**  
ABOUT THIS  
FIND...

BUT RAY  
WILL TELL  
THEM! HE ALWAYS  
DOES... NEVER EVEN  
KEEPS SO MUCH AS  
A **TRINKET** FOR  
HIMSELF AS A  
**SOUVENIR!**

WILKINS COULD BE, AH...  
**DONE AWAY WITH...**  
DISCREETLY, OF COURSE,  
HE **COULD** WANDER OFF  
INTO THE DESERT AND  
GET "LOST," COULDN'T  
HE?

HMM... THAT **WOULD**  
SOLVE THE PROBLEM  
...AND REDUCE THE  
SPLIT OF THE TREASURE  
DOWN TO TWO INSTEAD  
OF THREE! BUT, I  
DON'T KNOW...  
**MURDER, I MEAN.**  
I'VE NEVER...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT  
THAT, DIANA. THE  
NATIVE DIGGERS ARE  
GONE... NO WITNESSES!  
AND BESIDES, I'LL HANDLE  
EVERYTHING... ALL YOU  
HAVE TO DO IS PLAY A  
SIMPLE PART IN A  
**PLAN I HAVE...**

DAWN FINDS RAYMOND  
WILKINS SOMEWHAT  
REFRESHED AND EAGER  
TO BEGIN HIS WORK.  
WITHIN THE TOMB, UN-  
AWARE THAT PETERS IS  
EAGER TO BEGIN WORK  
OF A RADICALLY  
DIFFERENT NATURE...

Y'KNOW, THERE ARE  
PROBABLY CHAMBERS  
IN THAT TOMB WE  
HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN  
YET! I CAN'T WAIT  
TO GET A GOOD LOOK  
AT SOME OF THAT  
STUFF! HOW 'BOUT  
YOU, PETERS?

RIGHT! I  
CAN'T WAIT!

CAN'T WAIT  
TO SEE YOU  
**DEAD** YOU  
FOOL!

ANXIOUS TO EXAMINE THE UNEXPLORED REGIONS OF THE TOMB, THEY FIND...

THE BURIAL CHAMBER! IT MUST BE!

OH, DO YOU THINK IT REALLY IS, RAY?

YES, I THINK PETERS IS RIGHT, DIANA!

DRAWING NEAR THE BURIAL CRYPT'S DOOR, A SUDDEN RUSH OF WIND THREATENS TO EXTINGUISH THE FLICKERING TORCHES...

HEY! ONE OF THESE CORRIDORS MUST MAKE A CONNECTION WITH THE OUTSIDE! THAT SURE WAS A STRONG GUST OF AIR!

BUT WAS IT JUST THE WIND? IT WAS SO COLD... AND JUST WHEN WE REACHED THE CRYPT CHAMBER! I'M FRIGHTENED!

NONSENSE! IT WAS JUST A DRAFT, NOTHING MORE! COME ON, PETERS... HELP ME OPEN THIS CRYPT!

I-I DON'T KNOW... FROM THE LOOKS OF THESE HIEROGLYPHS, IT SEEMS TO BE A CURSE! A CURSE UPON ANYONE WHO DARES TO DEFILE THIS CRYPT!

M-MAYBE THAT'S WHY NO LOOTERS HAVE TOUCHED THIS TOMB...

YOU'RE BOTH BABBLING NONSENSE! ANY EGYPTIAN TOMB EVER EXCAVATED WAS INSCRIBED WITH A SCORE OF PHONEY "CURSES"!

AND, AS WILKINS BEGINS TO PRY OPEN THE CRYPT DOOR, PETERS AND DIANA EXCHANGE KNOWING WINKS OF CONSPIRACY BEHIND HIS BACK...

I-IT'S GIVING... UHH...

VERY WELL... I'LL OPEN IT MYSELF!

AND YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I THERE HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED INSTANCES WHERE EVERY MEMBER OF AN EXPEDITION MET WITH UNEXPECTED DEATH AFTER TAMPERING WITH A TOMB. COUNT ME OUT!



THERE!  
I DID IT!  
AND JUST LOOK  
AT WHAT'S  
INSIDE!



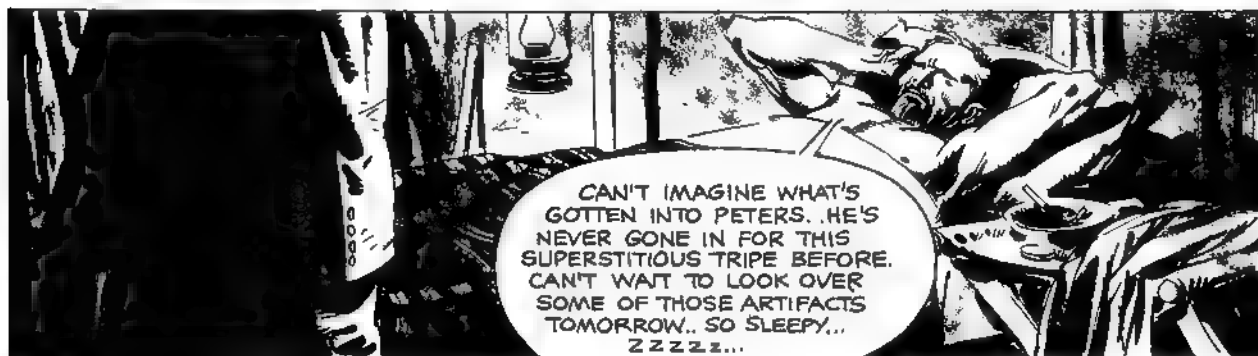
GOOD LORD!  
THIS IS THE  
TOMB OF  
RAMESES!



SHORTLY AFTER  
NIGHTFALL, PETERS  
AND DIANA APPROACH  
WILKINS WITH SOME  
DISCONCERTING  
NEWS...

WILKINS, THERE'S SOMETHING  
YOU OUGHT TO KNOW... I'VE  
COMPLETELY DECIPHERED  
THOSE HEIROGLYPHICS... THEY  
WARN THAT RAMESES... THE  
**MUMMY SHALL RISE FROM  
THE DEAD** IF HIS TOMB IS  
DEFILED AND WRECK VENGE-  
ANCE ON ANYONE WHO DIS-  
TURBS HIS ETERNAL REST!

LOOK, ARE YOU  
STILL HARPING ABOUT  
THAT? I'VE GOT TO  
GET SOME REST!  
THERE'S PLENTY OF  
WORK TO DO IN  
THE MORNING!



CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT'S  
GOTTEN INTO PETERS... HE'S  
NEVER GONE IN FOR THIS  
SUPERSTITIOUS TRIBE BEFORE.  
CAN'T WAIT TO LOOK OVER  
SOME OF THOSE ARTIFACTS  
TOMORROW... SO SLEEPY...  
Zzzzz...



THEN, AS THE SHADOW OF A SLOW BUT RELENTLESSLY TREADING FIGURE IS CAST UPON THE SIDE OF HIS TENT, SOMETHING... PERHAPS AN INEXPLICABLE SIXTH SENSE... GRIPS WILKINS AND CAUSES HIM TO STIR RESTLESSLY IN HIS SLEEP...



WILKINS AWAKENS.. ONLY TO SEE, LOOMING OMINOUSLY BEFORE HIM, THE GAUZE-WRAPPED FORM OF...



A MUMMY!  
N-NO, IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!



IT'S A JOKE, RIGHT? Y-YOU'RE PETERS DRESSED UP AS A MUMMY FOR A J-JOKE, RIGHT? HAHAHAHA!

WITH EACH SHUFFLING STEP FORWARD, WILKINS' HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER BECOMES INCREASINGLY MORE FRANTIC...



Y-YES...HAHA, IT'S FUNNY, A RIOT, PETERS! BUT YOU CAN STOP NOW...STOP PETERS, STOP! MGGOD, STOP IT! SAY SOMETHING, PETERS!

...UNTIL FINALLY, WITH A LAST HORRIBLY GURGLING SHRIEK, HE CRUMPLES LIFELESSLY TO THE GROUND, SEEMINGLY A VICTIM OF HIS OWN FEAR...





I HEARD THE SCREAM. HE'S DEAD THEN, ISN'T HE?

I DON'T KNOW. I NEVER EVEN TOUCHED HIM!



NO HEARTBEAT. JIM THE SHOCK COMBINED WITH FRIGHT MUST HAVE CAUSED A HEART ATTACK!



I TOLD YOU MY PLAN WOULD WORK! NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS WRAP HIM UP IN THIS GAUSE AND LEAVE HIM IN THE TOMB WITH THE REST OF THE MUMMIES! HA HA!

AFTER HAVING WRAPPED WILKINS AND DEPOSITED HIM IN ONE OF THE MUMMY CASKETS, DIANA TRAVIS AND JAMES PETERS RETURN TO THE TOMBS MAIN TREASURE CACHE TO RE-EXAMINE THEIR WEALTH...

THIS STUFF'LL GO A LONG WAY, DIVIDED BETWEEN ONLY THE TWO OF US! AND NOW GOOD BODY MR. RAYMOND WILKINS CAN'T TURN US IN!



I CAN'T WAIT TO START SPENDING THE MONEY THIS WILL BRING! FAST CARS, GOOD WINE, SUN-BATHING IN RIO, EVERYTHING I'VE EVER WANTED!

SO ENGROSSED IS PETERS IN THOUGHTS OF HIS PROSPECTIVE WEALTH THAT HE DOES NOT EVEN NOTICE THE SHAMBLING FIGURE WHICH APPROACHES WITH SLOWLY OMINOUS FOOTSTEPS, UNTIL...

JUST THINK DIANA WE'LL BE RICH... NO! A MUMMY WALKING! NO! CAN'T BE... I'M GOING TO RIO... I'LL BE RICH... THIS CAN'T HAPPEN!



...TOO LATE!

MUMMIES ALIVE... THE CURSE... BUT IT'S NONSENSE... NOT TRUE URKK!



PETER'S LIFE IS STRANGLERED MERCILESSLY FROM HIM! THEN, WITH A CARELESS GESTURE, HIS GAUSE-BOUND MURDERER CASTS HIS BODY ASIDE...

YOU DID IT, RAY! HA! IMAGINE PETERS PROPOSING A PLAN TO ME WHICH WOULD KILL YOU! IF ONLY HE KNEW THAT WE ALREADY HAD A COUNTER-PLAN TO MURDER HIM AND DIVIDE THE TREASURE OURSELVES!



OF COURSE! WHAT COULD HAVE POSSIBLY GONE WRONG? HA HAH! AND NOW THIS TREASURE IS ALL OURS... CURSE OR NO CURSE! I'LL DRINK TO OUR SUCCESS! OUT HERE, IT HAS TO BE WATER, BUT ONCE WE REACH CIVILIZATION!



AT FIRST THE WATER SOOTHES THROATS PARCHED BY EXCITEMENT EXERTION... THEN, ABRUPTLY, SOMETHING SEARS THEM, CHOKES THEM...

AKK-GAHH! MY TROATH... WHAT'S HAPPENING?

L-LORD... NO! PETERS MUST HAVE POISONED THE CANTEN, INTENDING TO FINISH YOU OFF TOO SO HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO SHARE THE TREASURE... GAHH!



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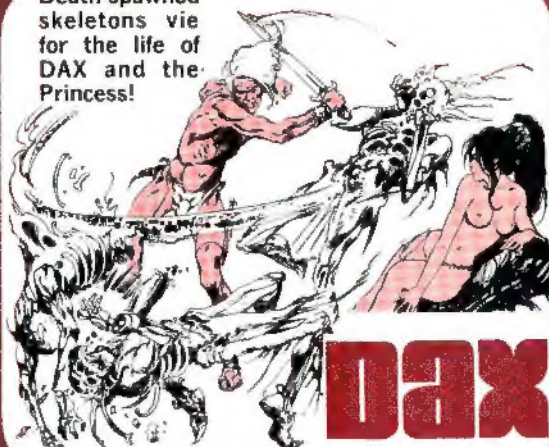
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